Hafa Adai!

SIS Class of 2020 valedictorians continue to shine. PAGE 2

Man'amko take part in Kimchi Cooking Workshop. PAGE 3

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DUE TO ACT OF VANDALISM ON VEHICLES

JKPL pulls out of LibDay Parade

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

» Also cancels Summer Reading Program at Tanapag Youth Center

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library has been forced to pull out of tomorrow's Liberation Day Parade as well as cancel its much-anticipated Bookmobile Outreach Services' Summer Reading Program for the Tanapag Youth Center due to a shocking act of vandalism.

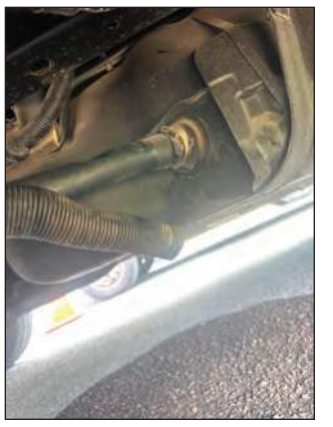
See JKPL on Page 4

JKPL

Visible gasoline stains indicating the leakage from under Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's Bookmobile after vandals got to it last Friday.

JKPL

The Joeten-Kiyu Public Library's Bookmobile and the Technology Mobile Express vehicles fell victim to gasoline-siphoning fiends last June 28 as they sit at the state library's parking lot in Susupe.



JKPL

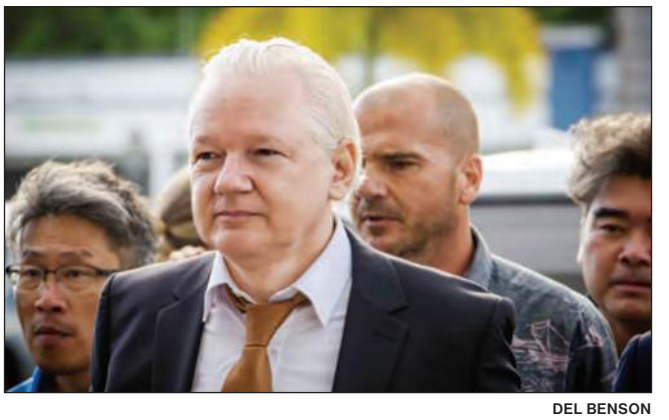
Vandals cut fuel lines and siphoned gas last June 28, rendering two of Joeten Kiyu Public Library's vehicles inoperable.

Where America's day begins and it begins with a surprise: Julian Assange's court day

By DEL BENSON
Special to the Saipan Tribune

As dawn broke over the island's pristine beaches, word spread like wildfire through the tight-knit community of 40,000. The tiny island of Saipan, accustomed to the rhythms of tropical life—swaying palms, gentle waves, and the occasional

See WHERE on Page 4



DEL BENSON

WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange exits the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands amidst the throng of local and international media last June 26.

PSS FY25 budget now over $33M

» COE: Upcoming fiscal year will not see any education disruption

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Office of the Governor has submitted a revised fiscal year 2025 budget to the Legislature which now reflects a budget of over $33 million to the CNMI Public School System, which represents an over $5.7-million jump from the first budget submission.

Last April, the Office of the Governor submitted its initial budget for FY25 to the CNMI Legislature reflecting

See PSS on Page 4

Palacios

Camacho

CCC owes IRS over $5.8M in unpaid taxes

By KIMBERLY B. ESMORES
kimberly_esmores@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Internal Revenue Service has filed a federal tax lien against the Commonwealth Casino Commission for over $5.8 million in unpaid taxes dating back to 2022.

Yesterday, the Department of Treasury Internal Revenue Service filed a tax lien against the CCC with the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

According to the federal tax lien, for tax period ending Dec. 31, 2022, the CCC has an unpaid balance of $5,863,195.43.

See CCC on Page 4

INSIDE

LOCAL

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam successfully concluded the first-ever full-scale exercise, dubbed Lina'la Halom Tasi 2024, on Saipan from June 25 to 27.

PAGE 9

NATION

The Supreme Court ruled for the first time that former presidents have broad immunity from prosecution, extending the delay in the Washington criminal case against Donald Trump on charges he plotted to overturn his 2020 presidential election loss.

PAGE 10

LIFE & STYLE

Usher accepted the lifetime achievement award at the 2024 BET Awards–even if the superstar mused it might be a bit early.

PAGE 11

SCAN ME WITH A COMPATIBLE QR READER TO KEEP UPDATED ON ALL THE LATEST NEWS.

Local

SIS Class of 2020 valedictorians continue to shine

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Anika Snyder graduated with a First Class BSc (honours) in Ecology and Conservation from the prestigious University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Malika Miyawaki is set to begin her career at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, the largest pediatric hospital in Georgia.

Saipan International School proudly celebrates the continued success of its Class of 2020 valedictorians, Anika Snyder and Malika Miyawaki. These remarkable alumnae have achieved significant academic and professional milestones, underscoring the exceptional education and foundation provided by SIS.

Anika Snyder graduated with a First Class BSc (honours) in Ecology and Conservation from the prestigious University of St. Andrews. Located in Scotland, the University of St. Andrews is renowned for its rigorous academic programs and rich history, being the third oldest university in the English-speaking world. Snyder's outstanding academic performance earned her a place on the dean's list. Her dissertation, titled "Analysis of Life History Trade-Offs Reveals Potential Benefits in Body Condition and Immune Response Associated with the Curly-Wing Morph in Pacific Field Crickets," reflects her deep commitment to ecological research and conservation.

This fall, Snyder will embark on a PhD program in Wildlife Biology in the Whitely Lab at the University of Montana. The Whitely Lab is recognized for its cutting-edge research in conservation genomics and its commitment to understanding and preserving biodiversity. Snyder's dedication to advancing scientific understanding in this field has also been recognized through the NextGen scholarship, administered by Northern Marianas College.

Malika Miyawaki has graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) from Emory University. Emory, located in Atlanta, Georgia, is a leading institution known for its strong emphasis on research and healthcare education. Miyawaki is set to begin her career at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, the largest pediatric hospital in Georgia. During her academic journey, Miyawaki completed a highly competitive summer internship in the brain and spinal cord trauma rehabilitation unit, which resulted in a full-time offer starting in August.

At Emory University, Miyawaki distinguished herself as one of the 100 Senior Honorary students. The Emory 100 Senior Honorary is a prestigious recognition awarded by Emory University to 100 seniors who have made significant contributions to the university community. Being named to the Emory 100 Senior Honorary is a high honor that celebrates the diverse talents and impactful efforts of graduating seniors who have exemplified excellence and dedication throughout their time at Emory. She was a scholar in the Emory In Motion program, which provides mobile health services to underserved communities. Her leadership and dedication were evident through her executive roles in organizations such as the Global Medical Missions Alliance, Remote Area Medical, and the Asian Student Organization.

Both Snyder and Miyawaki exemplify the values and educational excellence of Saipan International School. Their achievements are a testament to their hard work, dedication, and the supportive community that has nurtured their talents.

"We are continually impressed with Anika and Malika here at SIS," said headmaster Dr. Ron Snyder. "Their accomplishments are inspiring and serve as a shining example to our current students. We are confident that they will continue to make significant contributions in their respective fields and beyond."

Saipan International School is dedicated to providing a high-quality education that fosters academic excellence, personal growth, and global citizenship. Our mission is to prepare students to become responsible, respectful, and resourceful individuals who can thrive in a rapidly changing world. For more information about SIS and its program, please visit the school website at: https://www.saipaninternationalschool.com/. ***(PR)***

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NMC nursing graduate passes NCLEX-RN

Northern Marianas College nursing graduate Patricia Atalig has joined the long list of NMC students who have passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses or NCLEX-RN. Nursing graduates must pass the NCLEX-RN to be able to practice nursing. The exam tests the knowledge, skills, and abilities of nursing graduates to certify that they can apply entry-level nursing practices correctly.

"It's great to see more and more NMC nursing graduates pass the challenging NCLEX-RN," said NMC president Dr. Galvin Deleon Guerrero. "I congratulate Patricia on this accomplishment."

Atalig

NMC Nursing Department chair Rosa Aldan likewise congratulated Atalig on her achievements.

"Patricia has a bright future in the nursing field and we expect to see great things from her as her educational and professional journey continues," Aldan said.

Atalig acknowledged the demand for healthcare professionals in the CNMI and saw her nursing degree as an opportunity to give back to her community. She also emphasized the important role that her family, friends, and instructors have played in her successful passage of the NCLEX.

"My instructors have taught and guided me through nursing school and gave me all that I needed to pass," the 2023 NMC graduate said. "My family and friends supported me throughout nursing school and after while studying for the NCLEX, reminding me to take breaks and never giving up on me."

Additionally, Atalig noted that the Kaplan sessions provided throughout NMC's nursing program were helpful. They expanded her test-taking strategies and covered the core subject knowledge necessary to take the NCLEX.

In advice to other NMC students who plan on taking the NCLEX, Atalig highlights the value of self-care. "Self-care is very important when studying for the NCLEX. It is okay to take breaks and rest days to take care of your mental and physical health."

For more information about NMC's nursing program, email Rosa T. Aldan at rosa.aldan@marianas.edu or call (670) 237-6744. ***(PR)***

Man'amko take part in Kimchi Cooking Workshop

By RACQUEL H. FLOYD
raxfloyd@gmail.com
CORRESPONDENT

P&A Corp. and Winners Restaurant sponsored the Kimchi Cooking Workshop organized by Korean Cultural Center yesterday morning at Man'amko Center in China Town.

According to Doyi Kim, P&A vice president, the Korean Cultural Center on Tinian, led by pastor Sung Jin Ho, invited P&A to join their volunteer workshop on kimchi-making.

"Our company, P&A Corp. which operates Winners Restaurant, is always eager to participate in such special cultural activities. We also reached out to Man'amko Center to collaborate on this event, and they kindly agreed. This collaboration allowed us to enjoy the workshop together and strengthen community bonds and engagement."

RACQUEL FLOYD

Office on Aging director Walter Manglona awards certificates of appreciation to the coaches of Kimchi Cooking Workshop.

COACHES: SHIKDO CHURCH LADIES
VOLUNTEER KIMCHI COOKING WORKSHOP
Organizer: Korean Cultural Center Sponsor: P&A Corporation dba Winners Restaurant
MANAMKO' CENTER JULY 2, 2024 10:00 AM

RACQUEL FLOYD

Shikdo Church Ladies Group coaches pose with their certificates.

Meanwhile, Felix Nogis, executive assistant of the Carolinian Affairs Office, said that it's part of the community outreach program on behalf of Sikto Church from Korea.

"This effort is made possible through Hong Kyun Kim (owner of Winners Corp.), which requested my assistance on something worthwhile to teach our *man'amko*," he said.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Office on Aging director Walter Manglona poses with the organizers.

Kim said that there are numerous varieties of kimchi, but the coaches from Shikdo Church Ladies Group focused on two traditional recipes. The first is traditional soaked kimchi, which is typically made for the cold season in Korea. Traditionally, this kimchi is prepared once a year and stored in the refrigerator for up to a year, during which various dishes can be made from it. The second type is fresh kimchi, which is less fermented and usually consumed immediately after preparation.

The *man'amko* were entertained by performances, which included traditional Korean dances set to Christian music. The performers danced to "Arirang," a classic Korean folk song, in a rendition by BTS, the famous Korean music group.

Doyi Kim told *Saipan Tribune* that the performers and teachers are from Shikdo, a small island in Jeollanam-Do, Korea. The island is home to many fishermen.

"The performers, who are the coaches for this event, are the wives of these fishermen. They brought fresh fish salt from their island to use in the Kimchi-making process today," she said.

Walter Manglona, the director of Office on Aging, said that he was approached by Nogis and that he became excited with the program because it was something new to them and knowing kimchi is a Korean staple and good for digestion.

He also mentioned when asked about the food impact of kimchi to the elders, "It's always good that they consult their, you know, healthcare provider, their doctor, their nutritionists to be able to talk to what's best for them, but being able to learn a new skill is definitely always something that we're open to. We encourage them to continue learning," he said.

The distribution of certificates of appreciation to Seon Ok Nim, Kim Hyundai Soon, Na In Hye, Lee Song Ja, Kim Jeom Im, Lee Youn Su, and pastor Park Young Bin concluded the event.

Manglona thanked all the organizations, churches, and agencies that supported the workshop.

"I just want to thank them all and I want to urge them to continue. To support our seniors...I see them as our grandparents, you know, and for all their sacrifices and everything that they've done for us and our community. It's always nice to pay homage back to them, so I urge them to continue to show support and to stop by and to contribute or give back to our seniors.

The group will conduct the same workshop on Tinian on July 4 for the Tinian *man'amko*.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Korean dance by the Ma In Hye group.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Man'amkos of the Aging Center make kimchi.

RACQUEL FLOYD

Actual application of making kimchi.

RACQUEL FLOYD

P&A Corp. vice president Doyi Kim, left, interprets the workshop demonstration.

Office of the Public Auditor
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Website: http://opacnmi.com
1220 Route 312, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 501399, Saipan, MP 96950
E-mail Address: mail@opacnmi.com
Phone: (670) 322-6481

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Opening Date: 6/21/2024 Closing Date: 7/5/2024

POSITIONS	EXAMINATION NOS.
(1) Legal Counsel	OPA-24-001
(1) Audit Manager	OPA-24-002

The Application for Employment may be available for download at www.opacnmi.com and available for pick at the Office of the Public Auditor, Building 1220, Route 312, Capitol Hill.

Located at the Armatech Building in Chalan Kanoa across the intersection leading to the U.S. Post Office. For reservations or for more information, call 234-8894, 287-8895 and 488-8899.

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PUBLIC NOTICE
07/03/2024

Notice for Public Comment
Reprogramming of Emergency Solution Grants

Program Year/ IDIS No.:	Program:	Activity Name:	Subrecipient:	Approved Budget:	Proposed Reprogramming Amount:	Proposed Revised Project Budget:	Current IDIS Funded Amount:
IDIS# 751	HESG	PY2021 HESG22 HMIS		$8,000.00	($6,443.93)	$1,556.07	$8,000.00
		Total Reprogrammed from Activities:			**($6,443.93)**		
IDIS# 749	HESG	PY2021 HESG21 Rapid Rehousing NMHC		$39,825.33	$3,700.00	$43,525.33	$39,825.33
IDIS# 750	HESG	PY2021 HSG Homeless Prevention NMHC		$26550.22	$2,743.93	$29,294.15	$26,550.22
		Total Reprogrammed to Activities:			**$6,443.93**		

Our agency, through its Citizen Participation Plan (CPP), publishes a "Public Notice" on reprogramming funds from HMIS to a project activity, which constitutes as a substantial amendment. Therefore, any comments from the general public should be submitted to NMHC Central Office located in Garapan, Saipan, and to the Rota and Tinian Field Offices, on or before August 05, 2024 no later than 4:30 P.M. You may contact Ms. Zenie P. Mafnas, Deputy Corporate Director or Ms. Tricia Tenorio, Planner @ (670)234-6866/9447.

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Superior Court grants continuance in Parole chief fraud case

By CHRYSTAL MARINO
chrystal_marino@saipantribune.com
CORRESPONDENT

Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio yesterday granted a continuance in the high-profile fraud case against Parole chief Nick Reyes and his co-defendant Chuilian Fu at the Guma Hustisia in Susupe.

The CNMI Supreme Court granted the continuance following a series of legal maneuvers, one of which addresses potential conflicts of interest among the defense attorneys.

Reyes is represented by Joaquin DLG Torres, while Anthony Aguon is the counsel for Fu.

The "newly discovered conflict of interest" involves defense attorneys Torres and Aguon, who represent former governor Ralph DLG Torres in a separate case. Assistant attorney general James Kingman highlighted that the Commonwealth views this as an unwaivable conflict of interest and has brought it to the court's attention.

Kingman presented evidence, including purchase orders and invoices, showing connections between Fu and former governor Torres. One such document is a purchase order approved by then governor Torres for four 20-foot containers, paid to F&S Corp., a tailoring company owned by Fu. Another involved payments for 350 hats for the Department of Public Safety, again approved by Torres, with payments just under the $10,000 threshold that requires competitive bidding.

"The exhibits indicate how pervasive this pattern was, with payments from the CNMI to F&S Corp.," Kingman noted. He also cited a letter from Reyes to Fu claiming F&S Corp. was paid "by mistake" for a structure built by parolees, suggesting there was no mistake.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

JKPL

From page 1

The Summer Reading Program was originally scheduled for July 10-12, 2024.

According to a press release JKPL shared yesterday, on the morning of June 28, an unknown perpetrator or perpetrators caused severe damage to both the Bookmobile and the Technology Mobile Express while the vehicles were parked at the library's lot in Susupe. The culprits cut the fuel lines and siphoned the gas from both vehicles, rendering them inoperable.

JKPL's Vincent Sablan expressed his deep disappointment over the incident, stating, "The staff and management of the Joeten-Kiyu Public Library are deeply saddened by this turn of events and are working diligently to rectify the situation as quickly as possible. We are cooperating with local law enforcement to investigate the incident and ensure that those responsible are held accountable for their actions."

Sablan assured the public that the library is committed to finding alternative solutions and resuming the program at the earliest opportunity, once the vehicles are deemed safe and operable.

"We understand the disappointment and inconvenience this may cause to our community members, particularly the children who were eagerly anticipating the Summer Reading Program at Tanapag Youth Center. Rest assured, we are committed to finding alternative solutions and continuing the program at the earliest available opportunity should both vehicles be safe to operate for our community and by our team," he added.

In an interview with JKPL director Erlinda Naputi, she expressed that it was truly heartbreaking to see these careless acts, and watch them effect the children.

"It is really a sad incident. Children are now affected by criminal acts."

She shared that along with the halt of the summer program, they also had to pull out of this year's Liberation Day festivities, and the incident wasn't the first incident.

"We also had our typhoon shutters stolen last April. We have evidence to prove who did it, but the police have yet to make an arrest."

She told *Saipan Tribune* that the same day thieves took the shutters, she and staff looked around the island, checking all recycling centers on island, and they finally located their shutters at the Triple Star Recycling Center in As Lito. Naputi said that she called the police with the new information, and evidence, but have yet to see any arrests made.

She said that there was surveillance footage at the recycling center that captured the men who sold the shutters to the center, and now almost two months later their own security cameras got footage that caught vandals messing with the vans.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

WHERE

From page 1

typhoon—was about to host an unexpected visitor. Julian Assange, the WikiLeaks founder who had spent years in legal limbo, was coming to Saipan, not far from his home country as far as the vast Pacific Ocean reaches. His purpose: to appear before Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona of the U.S. District Court for the Northern Mariana Islands, 3,000 miles from Australia.

Not since the Emperor of Japan's visit in 2006 had Saipan seen such a globally significant figure. Some call him a villain, others a hero.

I got a text from my son yesterday: "Julian Assange is coming to court at nine o'clock today." I was shocked. After all, it's not every day that a man who's made headlines around the world shows up in our corner of the Pacific.

Early morning, the usually sleepy courthouse in the capital of Saipan had transformed into a hive of activity. Journalists from across Asia descended on the island, their camera equipment incongruously set around the parking lot. The local press was talking back and forth with the enthusiasm of a finished election.

Suddenly, the quiet street erupted into a flurry of activity as four SUVs and a van pulled up to the courthouse. The arrival sparked a frenzy among the waiting press corps. Photographers and writers scrambled forward, jostling for position like eager children rushing to the front of a dessert line. Being older and less nimble, I opted for a different strategy. I hung back, leveraging my professional-grade camera with its powerful zoom lens. From my vantage point, I managed to capture three crisp, tight shots of Julian Assange as he emerged from the vehicle and made his way into the courthouse.

The moment passed in a blur of flashing cameras and shouted questions. As quickly as it had begun, the commotion subsided as Assange disappeared behind the courthouse doors. With the initial excitement over, I carefully secured my trusty Nikon in my car. No photography would be allowed inside, and I wasn't about to risk my equipment or my chance to witness history unfold.

A longer version of this story is available at www. saipantribune.com

CCC

From page 1

Revenue officer Martin Humpert stated in its tax lien against CCC that IRS has made a demand for payment of this liability, but it remains unpaid.

"As provided by section 6321, 6322, and 6323 of the Internal Revenue Code, we are giving a notice that taxes (including interest and penalties) have been assessed against [CCC]. We have made a demand for payment of this liability, but it remains unpaid. Therefore, there is a lien in favor of the United States on all property and rights to property belonging to this taxpayer for the amount of these taxes, and additional penalties, interest, and costs that may accrue," said Humpert.

In a comment from CCC chair Edward Deleon Guerrero, he said the tax lien could be a mistake on IRS' side.

"I think someone at the IRS made a mistake. We are a government agency not a small business, nor self-employed, nor a corporation. The Department of Finance processes all our employee payroll. All required Social Security withholding are done by DOF not CCC. Also, [the mailing address listed] is not our mailing address, it's the CNMI DOF," he said

Previously, CCC submitted a budget request of over $4 million to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and special assistant for management and budget Virginia C. Villagomez.

According to CCC board chair Rafael S. Demapan, and CCC executive director Andrew Yeom, the $4,278,881 will be used for personnel, operations, and other related costs to enable the CCC to implement its casino statutory and regulatory mandates.

Of this amount, $1,108,831 would have been used for wages and salaries, board compensation, and other operational costs, Demapan and Yeom said.

Demapan and Yeom requested assistance and approval from Palacios and Villagomez in appropriating at least $1.1 million to keep the CCC afloat for at least a year.

The two officials said they are aware that there is a public sentiment to shut down the commission since there is no gaming activity. However, they noted that CCC's existence is necessary as long as there's still a valid casino license.

However, based on the revised budget submitted last July 1, the Office of the Governor has appropriated $2 to CCC or FY 2025.

The CCC's office at the Springs Plaza in Gualo Rai has been temporarily closed since Jan. 19, 2023 due to the lack of funds.

The CCC has been facing a budget crisis after IPI was temporarily closed in March 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The commission's entire source of funds for its operations comes from IPI's annual casino regulatory fee of $3,150,000. IPI has failed to pay that fee since 2020.

USS *Rafael Peralta* will conduct port visit on Saipan

ASAN, Guam—Sailors of the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS *Rafael Peralta* (DDG 115) will conduct a port visit on Saipan this week. During their visit, sailors will join in the Liberation Day Parade on July 4.

The USS *Rafael Peralta* is forward deployed and assigned to Commander, Task Force 71/ Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 15, the Navy's largest DESRON and the U.S. 7th Fleet's principal surface force.

U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region. ***(PR)***

PSS

From page 1

a breakdown of how over $158 million would be disbursed among government agencies, program, etc.

Under the initial budget submission, the Office of the Governor allocated $27,715,372 to PSS.

However, under the revised budget submitted last July, PSS saw a $5.7-million bump in its budget allocation with its new budget being $33,466,869.

According to Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, the revised budget allocation to PSS has increased by $5.75 million to $33.6 million due to extensive budget discussions with the administration, members of the CNMI State Board of Education, and PSS leadership

"Members of the CNMI State Board of Education and PSS leadership presented this funding level as sufficient to maintain the quality of education provided to thousands of students. The administration committed to support this funding request in the revised budget," he said.

The increase of PSS' budget, however, comes at a cost and that includes reduction in personnel costs and costs to other programs.

"The administration's commitment to the Public School System involves a revision to the proposed budget that requires reallocating funds from the Executive Branch to PSS, further reducing personnel costs by $5.36 million and costs to other programs. Although Executive Branch personnel are funded by the general fund at approximately 60 hours, the current austerity work schedule of 70 hours will be maintained," he said.

In a statement from Education Commissioner Dr. Lawrence F. Camacho, he said this revision in PSS' budget will allow PSS to continue to provide uninterrupted learning opportunities to nearly 10,000 students.

"On June 24, I and our key PSS team and members of the Board of Education met with Gov. Arnold I. Palacios and Lt. Gov. David M. Apatang as part of our continuing discussion about how we, as partners, can collectively and collaboratively work to ensure that public education services through PSS are able to fulfill their constitutional mandate of providing uninterrupted learning opportunities to our nearly 10,000 students and over 1,500 employees. Both PSS and the Palacios administration agree that this can only be accomplished if funding is available, given our financial challenges," he said.

"I can honestly state that, since my arrival in January of this year, we have been successful in our efforts to collaborate with the leadership of Gov. Palacios and his team in bringing attention to the ongoing need for funding for our public school system. After meeting with the governor and lieutenant governor on June 24, my PSS team and I felt relieved, thankful, and reassured that our kids will continue to attend school five days a week and that our teachers and staff will continue to work and provide services that are essential to our kids' education," Camacho added.

Thanks to PSS' budget revision, Camacho said the upcoming fiscal year will not see any disruptions to educational opportunities.

"As a result of our collaborative work, PSS, along with the support of BOE, and the Palacios administration, has been able to mitigate any possible negative effects that a lack of funding may have on the PSS and our learning community, specifically related to the expiration of our ARPA funding on Sept. 30," he said.

World Tuna Day celebrations to be held in Yap this July

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fisherfolk get ready to head out fishing during the 2023 World Tuna Day celebrations on Yap.

YAP, Federated States of Micronesia—Yap will be commemorating World Tuna Day by holding its celebrations from July 5-6, 2024. World Tuna Day has been observed internationally on May 2 since 2017, following the adoption of Resolution A/RES/71/124 by the United Nations General Assembly on Dec. 7, 2016. This date commemorates the achievement of fishing communities, scientists, and environmentalists who came together to protect tuna schools around the world and help create a sustainable fishing model.

For the Federated States of Micronesia, this year's theme is "Our Tuna, Our Legacy," underscoring the shared responsibility amongst the people on all four states in protecting this valuable resource. For Yap, the observation of World Tuna Day was delayed to July so that proper celebrations could be organized that would sufficiently recognize Yap's rich fishing heritage and the vital role that tuna plays in both its economy and culture.

The highlight of the World Tuna Day celebrations on Yap will be a fishing derby open to fisherfolk of all skill levels on Friday, July 5. The weigh-in for the derby will take place on the IBoom compound in Colonia and prize money will be awarded in various categories. On the second day, July 6, there will be several engaging activities including boat and raft races, a tuna filleting and cooking competition, and several activities for school children.

Yap is an island in the Federated States of Micronesia, in the Pacific Ocean that is ringed by spectacular coral reefs and famous for its scuba diving with giant manta rays, sharks and mandarin fish. Other key activities on the island include kayaking, hiking, deep-sea fishing and exploring the many World War II historical sites. Yap is also uniquely famous for its stone money (huge disks of stone, which are still used today in major transactions), strong traditional culture and way of life, and welcoming residents. A short flight away from Guam or Palau, this Pacific gem is one of the tourism industry's best-kept secrets. For more information: www.visityap.com. ***(PR)***

GEDA affirms dedication to transparency, open governance

TAMUNING, Guam—At the recent Guam Economic Development Authority board meeting, chair David John addressed important matters concerning the agency's commitment to transparency and support for sustainable development initiatives.

During the meeting, John acknowledged that at the previous board meeting, certain motions may not have followed the open government process as intended. Restating the agency's dedication to transparency and open governance, the chairman emphasized that adherence to proper procedures is crucial in upholding the principles of good governance.

The board reaffirmed its strong support for solar energy initiatives and expressed a commitment to supporting the use of CHamoru Land Trust leases to enhance infrastructure for housing and economic development. The agency stands ready to provide assistance and expertise to facilitate these initiatives.

However, John made it clear that the agency does not support the conversion of the municipal golf course, designed to foster junior golf development and support Guam's tourism infrastructure, into a solar farm. Instead, the board advocates for a Public-Private Partnership model similar to the successful one established for the Guam National Tennis Center. The agency played a key role in the development of the tennis center and believes that a similar approach could benefit both junior golfers and retirees in our community.

As GEDA remains committed to fostering sustainable and inclusive growth on our island, John affirmed the agency's readiness to collaborate with all stakeholders to pursue initiatives that benefit the community as a whole. ***(PR)***

Karidat can't accept clothing donations for July

Karidat Social Services would like to inform the community that it will not be able to accept any in-kind donations of clothing for the month of July 2024.

They will use July to address the current overflow of donations and are hopeful that they will be able to accept donations next month.

Karidat is grateful for the generosity of the community.

For inquiries on other services being provided at Karidat, call the main office at (670) 234-5248 or (670) 234-6981. ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Economic Development Authority
P.O. Box 502149, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel: (670) 234-6245/6293/7145/7146 | Fax: (670) 235-7147 | www.developcnmi.com

INVITATION FOR BIDS
2024-CEDA-08-IFB

CLOSING DATE: Friday, July 12, 2024 TIME: 10:00 a.m.

"OFFICE SPACE FOR COMMONWEALTH ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CEDA) IN ROTA"

A copy of the bid may be picked up at the CEDA Office at 2390 Beach Road Oleai, Unit 205, Saipan, or at CEDA Rota Office at the Tamara & 7 Brothers Bldg., Songsong Village during regular business hours (7:30 am to 4:30 pm) Monday through Friday except CNMI holidays. The bid may also be obtained on our website at www.developcnmi.com.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reject any and all bids and proposals in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfections in a bid in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All bids shall become the property of the CNMI Government.

/S/ MANUEL A. SABLAN
Executive Director

/S/ BRIEN S. NICHOLAS JR.
Acting Director, Procurement Services

PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
RFP24-DCCA/CCDF-42400124

SUBMISSION DATE: August 02, 2024 TIME: 09:00 A.M.

"CCDF System of Support for Home-Based Providers (License or License-Exempt)"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED ON THE MUNIS VENDOR SELF SERVICE PORTAL AT (https://selfservice.dof.gov.mp/vss/) OR AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT SERVICES, LOCATED AT BUILDING NO. 1301, ASCENCION DRIVE, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ Francisco M. Rabauliman
SECRETARY, DCCA

/S/ Brien S. Nicholas, Jr.
ACTING DIRECTOR, PS

PROCUREMENT SERVICES
CNMI GOVERNMENT

ADDENDUM NO. 2
RFP24-JKPL -42400117:

ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING SERVICES FOR JKPL SOLAR PV PARKING STRUCTURE PROJECT

This Addendum no. 2 is issued to remove "Fee Proposal" from the Evaluation Criteria for this Request for Proposals. This change will ensure that all proposals will be evaluated based on qualifications of the proposing firm. The revised Evaluation Criteria is as follows:

1. Professional qualifications necessary for the satisfactory performance of the required services (30 points)
2. Project approach highlighting specialized experience and technical competence in the type of work required (25 points)
3. Workload and resources to accomplish the work in the required time-frame (25 points)
4. Past performance on contracts with Government agencies and private industry in terms of
5. cost control, quality of work, and compliance with performance schedules (20 points)

Total possible points: 100

All other requirements stated in the Request for Proposal and Addendum no. 1 remain the same.

/S/ Erlinda C. Naputi, Library Director
Joeten-Kiyu Public Library

/S/ Brien S. Nicholas, Jr.
Division of Procurement Services

Northern Marianas Technical Institute
P.O. Box 504880 Saipan MP 96950
Tel. No.: (670) 235-6684

Board of Trustees
Regular Board Meeting
July 9, 2024 | 1:30PM
NMTech Office

MEETING AGENDA

I. Call to Order
II. Adoption of Agenda - July 9, 2024
III. Adoption of Meeting Minutes - January 9, 2024
IV. Public Comments
V. Old Business
  A. Updates on Promulgation of Policies
  B. Establishing a Foundation
  C. Schedule for Quarterly Meetings
  D. Updates: Pending Trustees
VI. New Business
  A. Election of Officers
  B. Board Resolution - Financial Accounts
  C. Board review of MPLT Line of Credit MOA
  D. Board review of Policies
  E. Completed FY 2021 Audit
  F. Zoning for EDA Construction Project
    i. Zoning Public Hearing | July 11, 2024 at 2:00PM | Multipurpose Center, Susupe
  G. Seeking ACFEF Accreditation for Culinary
    i. Establishing an Advisory Committee
  H. DPL Lease Agreement - Lower Base
    i. Lease Agreement No. LA 09-001S
  I. Launch of New Programs
VII. Committee Updates
  A. Sub-Committee Updates
VIII. Executive Session
IX. Announcements
X. Adjournment

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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MEMBER

The Associated Press | Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

For the sake of the nation, Biden must reassure Americans he is up to a second term

There is no sugarcoating the fact that President Joe Biden seemed tired, listless and occasionally confused in his televised debate with former President Donald Trump on Thursday. In other words, he showed his age.

Trump, who at 78 is only a few years younger than the 81-year-old Biden, was initially more restrained and focused than usual. He tried to disarm criticism with clever if unconvincing arguments—such as the claim that "my retribution is going to be success."

Yet Trump soon reverted to form, engaging in unfair attacks and spewing falsehoods and wild theories—including the idea that the Biden administration instigated his prosecution in a New York court. Even a heartier Biden would have had to contend with Trump's nonstop lies, which the moderators of the debate declined to fact-check in real time.

On issues from the war in Ukraine to the climate crisis, Trump offered characteristically vague answers. Particularly absurd were his claims that, if he won the election, he would "have that war settled" and secure the release from Russia of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich—even before he was sworn in!

If all one was confronted with was a transcript of the debate, Biden's performance would look better. He effectively confronted Trump on the former president's complicity in the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection and scored several policy points. Alas, for many viewers, especially those who don't follow politics carefully, that mattered less than the fact that Biden confirmed Trump's caricature of "Sleepy Joe."

That doesn't mean that Biden is senile. He is still vastly preferable to Trump. Nor, despite the visible jitters of many Democrats, does the disappointing debate performance mean that Biden should step aside from running for reelection — a scenario fraught with its own problems for the Democratic Party. However, it does mean that the president has to reassure Americans who might now have doubts about his fitness for another term.

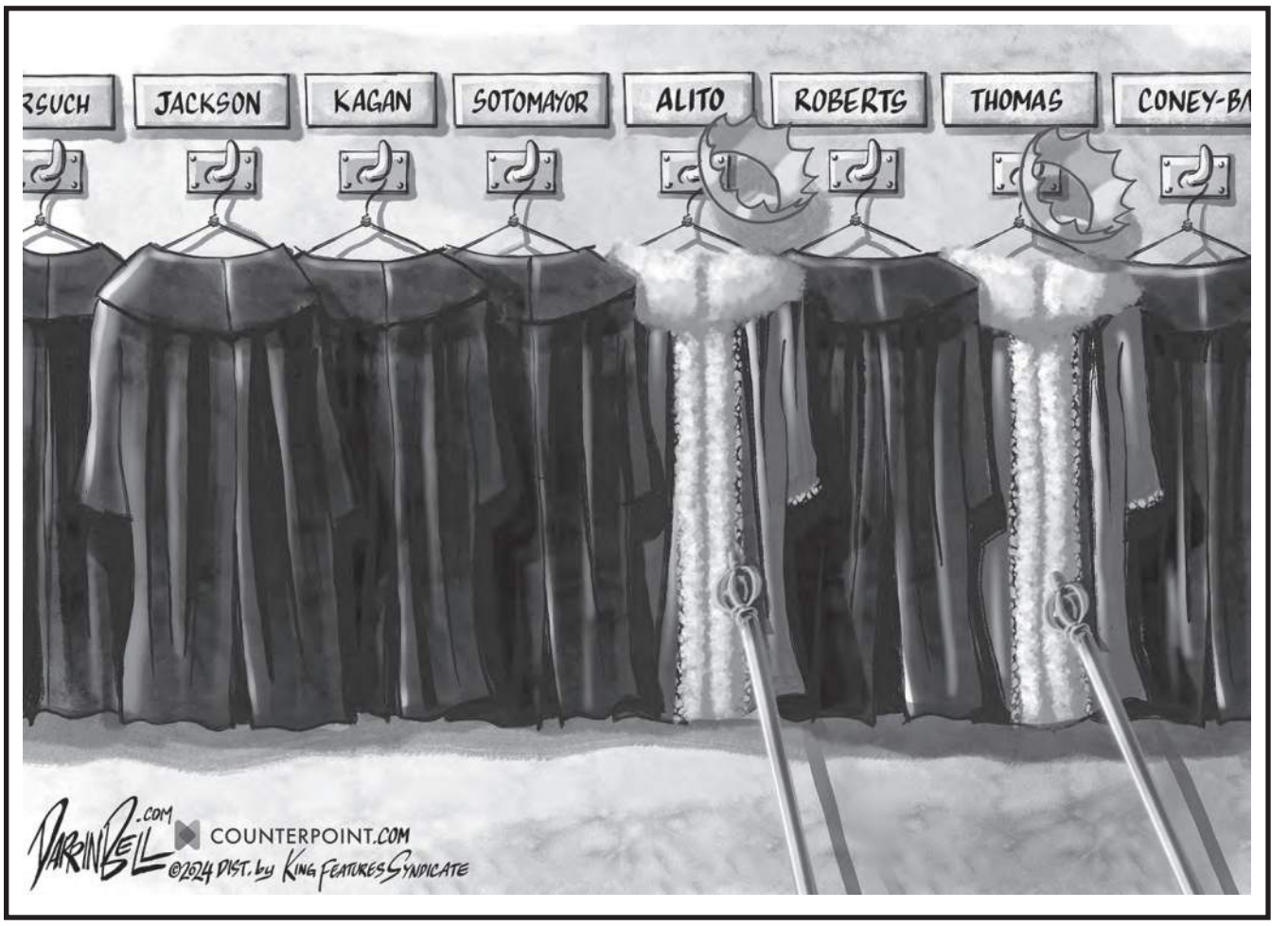
And of course there is the fact that even an on-point Trump is unfit to hold office. Trump's attempts to overturn the results of an election he lost culminated on Jan. 6 in the storming of the U.S. Capitol by his crazed supporters.

Asked about his actions and inaction on Jan. 6, Trump bizarrely turned the topic to his claims that conditions in the U.S. on that date were positive, including the irrelevant assertion that "we had a great border, nobody coming through, very few."

Such an attempted deflection of responsibility is outrageous. Trump's undeniable role in the Jan. 6 catastrophe resulted in his second impeachment by the House. If the Senate had convicted him, Americans might have been spared a possible comeback. But now the decision about Trump's future rests with the voters, who must be convinced by Biden that he is up for another term.

Asked about his age, Biden countered by citing his administration's accomplishments. It was a variation of "Watch what we do, not what we say" and it was well-founded. But it's understandable that voters who saw the debate as a test of

See BIDEN on Page 7



When does government speech violate the 1st Amendment?

By ERWIN CHEMERINSKY
Los Angeles Times

Erwin Chemerinsky is a contributing writer to Opinion and dean of the UC Berkeley School of Law.

As a dean of a public university law school, do I violate my students' free speech rights when I encourage them to speak respectfully to one another, to demonstrate civility and to refrain from hateful expression? There are countless instances in which government officials speak out—does that chill freedom of expression among those who disagree with what an official says? In two Supreme Court cases this term, including one decided Wednesday, the justices rightly reaffirmed that speech by government officials violates the 1st Amendment only if it includes an explicit threat of sanctions.

The Supreme Court last dealt with this issue in 1963, in Bantam Books v. Sullivan. That case involved a Rhode Island Commission to Encourage Morality in Youth that identified "objectionable" books and wrote to sellers urging them to stop selling those books. The letter also informed the recipient that the commission recommended obscenity cases to prosecutors and turned its list of distributors of objectionable books over to local police. In fact, a police officer often followed up and visited booksellers to see what actions had been taken. The Supreme Court found that such pressure constituted an unconstitutional infringement of speech, even though no books were actually banned and no prosecutions undertaken.

In National Rifle Association v. Vullo, decided on May 30, the court applied the Bantam Books decision, allowing a suit to go forward against Maria Vullo, who had been the superintendent of the New York Department of Financial Services. After the Parkland, Fla., school shooting in which 17 students and staff members were killed, Vullo encouraged insurance company and bank officials, whom she regulated, to no longer do business with the NRA: Vullo wouldn't pursue prosecutions against the businesses in exchange for the businesses ceasing their relationships with the NRA.

In a unanimous ruling, the Supreme Court found that the NRA had a 1st Amendment claim. Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote for the court, reaffirming Bantam Books v. Sullivan: "Government officials cannot attempt to coerce private parties in order to punish or suppress views that the government disfavors."

On Wednesday, in Murthy v. Missouri, the court considered a suit brought by two state governments and five social media users against the Biden administration and many federal agencies, claiming that the 1st Amendment was violated by the government's encouraging social media platforms to take down false speech. No platform was threatened with or relieved of prosecution, but the businesses were told that if they did not take down false speech—especially about the effects of the COVID-19 vaccines and the 2020 presidential election — they would face more regulation in the future.

A conservative panel of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 5th Circuit found that this amounted to a violation of the 1st Amendment. But 6-3, the Supreme Court ordered the case dismissed for lack of standing. (In order to have standing to sue in federal court, a plaintiff must show that he or she has been injured, that the injury was caused by the defendant, and that a favorable court decision is likely to remedy the harm.)

The Supreme Court said that none of the plaintiffs could show that social media companies took down false speech because of coercion from the government, so where was the harm? The court stressed that the "platforms had independent incentives to moderate content and often exercised their own judgment."

Although the Murthy decision is based on standing, it nonetheless has crucial implications for the 1st Amendment. Indeed, Justice Samuel Alito, in his dissent, described this as "one of the most important free speech cases to reach this Court in years." The premise of the majority decision is that social media companies are private entities and can decide for themselves what speech to carry and what to remove. The government encouraging them to remove false speech only violates the 1st Amendment if it can be proved that the government caused, and will cause in the future, speech to be blocked.

Both the NRA case and the social media case reaffirm that the speech of government officials violates the 1st Amendment only if it is coercive and only if it can be proven to cause harm. That means that public university deans like me need not fear a 1st Amendment violation for encouraging responsible speech by my students.

These decisions are especially important in the context of the internet and social media, where false speech is a huge problem. The government has few tools to deal with it. The court's rulings preserve the ability of officials to encourage social media platforms to take down false speech.

Less false speech on the internet and social media will benefit all of us.

Mass consumerism and the hypocrisy of Gen Z

By SARIKA PRUTHI and ARUSHI PARNIKA KHARBANDA
The Fulcrum

California lawmakers recently approved two bills banning grocery and convenience stores statewide from offering customers reusable plastic bags. These bills are the next step in combating plastic waste, but what about the waste from mass consumerism that has come to pervade our lives?

Through the past decades, we have been trained to shop, purchase and consume products to solve our problems. While mending old clothing or refurbishing used goods have become things of the past, new products that are ubiquitously promoted are cramming our stores, screens, mailboxes and nearly every aspect of our lives.

Growing up in the digital age, Gen Z is the prime target for this consumerist culture. Their lives are catered toward finding flaws with what they currently own and buying the next best thing. In the process, our world lays waste, proving the disastrous effects of those spending habits.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 1930, the average American woman owned nine outfits. Today, that figure is 30—one for every day of the month. Much of this clothing is hoarded. The Daily Mail reports that women in the U.K. buy half their body weight in clothes each year, storing 22 unworn items on average in their closets. While those who have the luxury to buy in excess live in momentary bliss, young women and children who are exposed to toxic chemicals in factories that manufacture those items pay the price.

We are deeply alarmed by the wicked social problems facing our world, and we need to reawaken Gen Z's consciousness on an urgent basis.

The origins of mass consumerism

Late Capitalism, a concept refined by German economist Werner Sombart, refers to the drastic expansion of goods and services in the West after World War II. As the U.S. solidified its role as a global leader, technological innovation ushered an era of prosperity. American citizens were able to buy a variety of goods and services like never before; in reality, they became "consumers."

This philosophy was not a sudden mistake, but a calculated attempt to build the U.S. economy while depleting resources to generate profits and uncritical consumers who submit to the system of mass production and mass marketing, an ever-widening abundance of goods within a culture that emphasizes buying and selling, desire, glamor and flexible, purchase-driven identities.

Mass consumerism became a grave reality with the rise of e-commerce platforms. Today, American consumers are surrounded by hundreds, if not thousands, of options for a singular good, and sellers who use a variety of unethical and exploitative tactics to lure consumers into buying more.

Gen Z's mass consumerism

Deemed as a trendsetting generation, Gen Z is known to defy expectations and break racial, gender, and social norms. Gen Z is praised for its care of diverse groups of people, its call for action regarding social injustices and its unwillingness to tolerate the status quo. Their preaching of climate activism and boycotting of brands merit accolades. However, Gen Z is also a generation that consumes at an unsustainable rate: clothes, makeup, technology and every other imaginable product.

The rise of e-commerce, trend cycles and social media has magnified these habits. One of the most evident instances of Gen Z's tendency to make large purchases for low prices is in the fast fashion industry.

The Chinese online giant Temu's catchline is "Shop like a billionaire," whereas stores like Forever 21 and Zara sell the idea of buying luxury on a budget. The more of an item Gen Z consumes, the less satisfaction they derive from each additional unit as the Law of Diminishing Marginal Utility aptly sums up.

According to data from CivicScience, 90 percent of Gen Z between the ages of 18 and 24 report using social media. A November 2022 Statista survey found that nearly 40% of Gen Zers in the U.S. spend more than four hours on social media platforms everyday.

In "GenZ and Media-Overexposure to Products Leads to Overconsumption," Kyungmin Min discusses the French term "Panoplie," which signifies a person who believes that their purchase of a particular product places them among a consumer group. From the Kardashians, who promote slim, sun-tanned bodies to rich influencers who advertise exclusive brands and businesses, social media has ingrained the message that if one buys a particular product, they are able to partake in a desired lifestyle.

Infiltrating our phones and cluttering the screens of TikTok, Youtube and Instagram, the aesthetics of "clean girl," "mob-wife" or "old-money" motivate purchases not only by a simple preference, but by a deeper desire to segment a connection with a social class.

The heart of Gen Z hypocrisy and a call to action

So, what can Gen Z do to address their conscious indulgence in fast fashion and other forms of mass consumerism? They can adjust their behavior to make a difference but they can also be proactive to have their voice heard. Whether it is as climate activists at global conferences or becoming involved in other corporate issues that interest them, it doesn't matter. Gen Zers can make a difference if they choose to become involved.

To be sure, just 100 of the world's companies are responsible for 71% of emissions. Yet, Gen Z cannot be absolved of their responsibility to combat consumerist culture. Several innovative new businesses like Patagonia and TOMS are socially responsible ventures that are extensions of their founders' philosophy of sustainable production and consumption.

Furthermore, no company can be successful without its customers. Whether it is Amazon, Target, Forever 21, Coca-Cola or Nestle, millions partake in their successes simply through buying their products.

The message for Gen Z is to not forget their own role in working towards a better planet. In addition to calling out companies if they believe profits are excessive they must work through their own actions and motivations to purchase fewer goods.

Let's collectively reduce our identities as consumers and replace them with refusers if we are to eradicate waste and mend the injustices and inequalities that we as individuals believe must be addressed.

Pruthi is a professor of entrepreneurship at San Jose State University, where she is a co-founder and director of HonorsX, and a public voices fellow with The OpEd Project. Kharbanda is a senior at Presentation High School in San Jose, Calif.

Yes, Biden looked and sounded awful. But the debate didn't change the stark choice we face

By ROBIN ABCARIAN
Los Angeles Times

Here's a terrible thought I could not shake as I watched Thursday's debate: President Joe Biden looked like a corpse.

Sure, anyone might look pale while standing next to the floridly orange former President Donald Trump, but Biden's pallor was alarming.

When he was not speaking, Biden's eyes had a faraway look, and, more distressingly, his mouth was slack. Compared with the overanimated Trump—who scowled, sneered and screwed up his mouth in a pout—Biden's face looked as if it had been dipped in Botox and frozen.

And his voice! What has happened to our loquacious president's voice? It was so whispery and phlegmy that I wanted to yell, "Just clear your throat, for God's sake!"

Biden's performance Thursday was revelatory, for all the wrong reasons.

For years, Republicans have tried to make us believe Biden is feeble. They've deceptively edited videos to make him look clueless, magnified his every small bumble and exploited his lifelong stutter, which old age seems to have exacerbated.

On Thursday, tragically, he did their work for them.

Trump was, of course, Trump: He spewed a volcano of lies, misstatements, exaggerations and fear-mongering. It seemed as if virtually nothing that came out of his mouth was true, especially his insistence that the United States under Biden has become a worldwide laughingstock, that Putin would never have invaded Ukraine on his watch, that Hamas would never have attacked Israel.

I recorded the debate and did not watch it until after it was finished. I refused to look at my phone—which was dinging like crazy—because I did not want to be influenced by anyone else's opinion of what had gone down. I wanted my impressions to be mine alone, free of whatever conventional wisdom was rapidly congealing in the cybersphere. And on Friday morning, I tried not to look at headlines, though it was obvious that Biden had a terrible, terrible night.

I conducted a thought experiment: If I read the transcript, would I be as alarmed by Biden's performance as I was while watching it on TV? Would his sepulchral presentation be apparent? Would he seem like a man in command of facts and history? Would he, to put it bluntly,make sense?

The answer is a resounding but bittersweet yes, because his substance will ultimately be less important than his geriatric demeanor.

Take the exchange on abortion, which will be a key issue in November, as it has in every election since the Supreme Court overturned Roe vs. Wade two years ago.

Here is Biden: "The idea that the politicians, that the founders wanted the politicians to be the ones making decisions about women's health, is ridiculous. That's the last—no politician should be making that decision. A doctor should be making those decisions. That's how it should be run. That's what you're going to do. And if I'm elected, I'm going to restore Roe v. Wade."

Trump came back with his crazy spigot on blast: "So that means he can take the life of the baby in the ninth month and even after birth, because some states—Democrat-run—take it after birth. Again, the governor—former governor of Virginia: 'Put the baby down, then we decide what to do with it.' So he's in—he's willing to, as we say, rip the baby out of the womb in the ninth month and kill the baby. Nobody wants that to happen."

(For years, Trump has been misrepresenting a 2019 statement by then-Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam, a Democrat and pediatric neurologist, about what happens when a nonviable fetus with severe deformities is delivered.)

Trump's statements are often ludicrous to the point of being nonsensical, but he speaks with the conviction of a pathological liar. During a back-and-forth on immigration, for instance, he spoke forcefully, but I have no idea what he was talking about:

"He decided to open up our border, open up our country to people that are from prisons, people that are from mental institutions, insane asylum, terrorists," Trump said. "We have the largest number of terrorists coming into our country right now. ... We had the safest border in history. In that final couple of months of my presidency, we had, according to Border Patrol, who is great—and, by the way, who endorsed me for president. But I won't say that. But they endorsed me for president. Brandon, just speak to him."

I'm sorry, what?

"I'm not saying no terrorist ever got through," Biden said of the border. "But the idea they're emptying their prisons, we're welcoming these people, that's simply not true. There's no data to support what he said. Once again, he's exaggerating. He's lying."

Tell me again, who is confused?

Regarding the economy, the No. 1 issue for most voters, CNN's Jake Tapper asked Biden, "What do you say to voters who feel they are worse off under your presidency than they were under President Trump?"

"We've got to take a look at what I was left when I became president, what Mr. Trump left me," Biden replied. "We had an economy that was in free fall. The pandemic was so badly handled. Many people were dying. All he said was, 'It's not that serious, just inject a little bleach in your arm. You'll be all right.' The economy collapsed. There were no jobs. The unemployment rate rose to 15%. It was terrible.

"And so, what we had to do is try to put things back together again. ... We created 15,000 new jobs. We brought out in a position where we have 800,000 new manufacturing jobs." (Biden meant to say a total of 15 million new jobs, which his campaign often boasts about.)

Trump's response to the question was, again, lies and nonsense:

"We had the greatest economy in the history of our country," he boasted, wrongly. "We have never done so well. Every—everybody was amazed by it. Other countries were copying us. We got hit with COVID. And when we did, we spent the money necessary so we wouldn't end up in a Great Depression, the likes of which we had in 1929. By the time we finished—so we did a great job. We got a lot of credit for the economy, a lot of credit for the military, and no wars and so many other things. Everything was rocking good."

Yes, Thursday's debate was painful to watch. Biden, who has maintained that his age, 81, is irrelevant, can no longer make that claim. His decline is distressing.

And yet whether he bows out of the race or not, the choice facing voters in November is stark: Do we want democracy, or do we want dictatorship? The answer should be obvious.

BIDEN

From page 6

vigor might not be satisfied with that response.

For the rest of the campaign, Biden needs to do more—and not just on the debate stage—to defend his record in the authoritative way he did at this year's State of the Union address. The stakes for the nation are too high.

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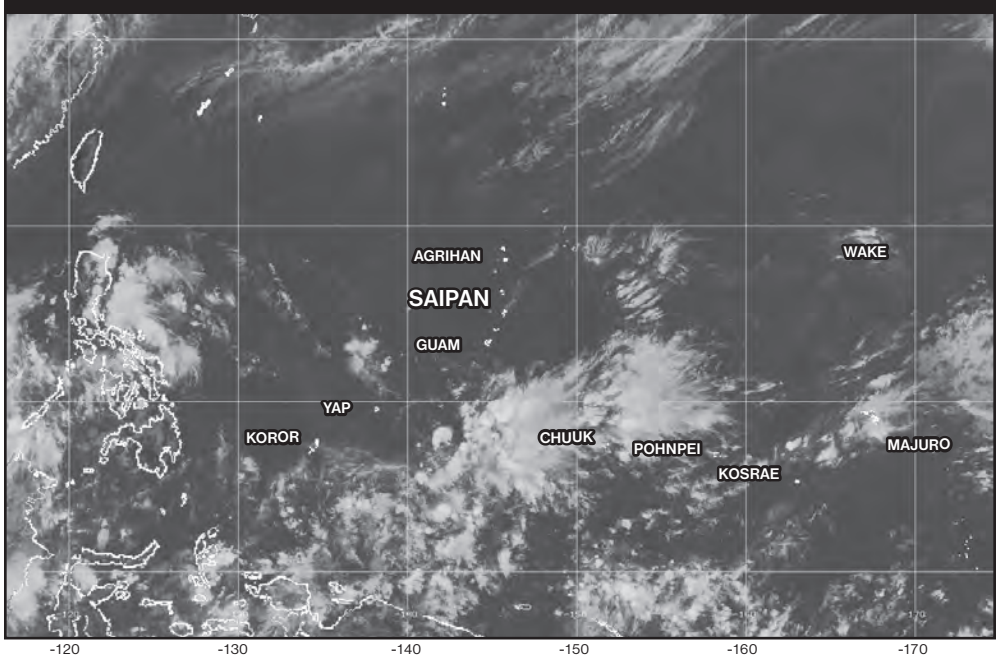
The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. East winds 10 to 15 mph.	Mostly cloudy with isolated showers and thunderstorms. East winds around 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.	Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers.
88° 77°	87° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 6:22 AM TUESDAY, JULY 2, 2024

Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Scattered showers still remain in the forecast for Guam and Rota today. However, due to the movement speed of the TUTT cell aloft, brought in thunderstorm potential for Guam earlier, to today instead. As such, isolated showers will move in tonight, but do not expect thunderstorms to form once again until Wednesday. Otherwise, the marine and surf forecasts remain unchanged.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: https://www.weather.gov/gum/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Partly Cloudy	88° / 79°
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 77°
Yap	Thunderstorm	85° / 78°
Chuuk	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 79°
Pohnpei	Mostly Cloudy	87° / 78°
Kosrae	Thunderstorm	85° / 77°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	87° / 82°

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Thursday	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Friday	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Saturday	5:51 AM	6:51 PM
Sunday	5:52 AM	6:51 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	2:55 AM	4:22 PM	-
Thursday	3:48 AM	5:24 PM	-
Friday	4:45 AM	6:23 PM	-
Saturday	5:44 AM	7:18 PM	-
Sunday	6:42 AM	8:07 PM	-

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Mostly Sunny	55° / 45°
Beijing	Light Rain	82° / 72°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	88° / 82°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	87° / 74°
London	Showers	70° / 55°
Los Angeles	Partly Cloudy	76° / 62°
Manila	Fair	92° / 82°
Melbourne	Partly Cloudy	57° / 43°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	91° / 80°
New York	Clear	79° / 64°
Osaka	Rain	81° / 76°
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	73° / 55°
Busan	Cloudy	80° / 71°
Rome	Sunny	91° / 68°
Salem	Thunderstorm	87° / 71°
San Francisco	Partly Cloudy	63° / 52°
Seoul	Rain	88° / 71°
Tokyo	Cloudy	87° / 77°
Washington, DC	Fair	80° / 65°

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
4:09 AM	High Tide	2.16
11:54 AM	Low Tide	-0.14
7:20 PM	High Tide	1.97
-	-	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 1, 2024

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA076	9:50AM	10:35AM	Daily

SAIPAN- NARITA (NRT)

UA824	11:50AM	2:25PM	1, 3, 5

GUAM-MANILA (MNL)

PR 111	5:55AM	7:55AM	Daily
UA193	6:50PM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Palau
UA183	7:10PM	9:10PM	Daily

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

7C3403/2305	4:45AM	10:20PM	Daily
UA076/183	9:50AM	9:10PM	Daily via Guam
UA076/193	9:50AM	10:55PM	2, 5 via Guam, Palau

SAIPAN-INCHEON (ICN)

TW308	3:15AM	7:00AM	Daily
7C3403	4:45AM	8:35AM	Daily
7C3405	4:10PM	7:45PM	Daily
7C3471	5:50PM	9:30PM	Daily from July 17

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX77	4:05AM	7:00AM	1, 5

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	8:00AM	8:50AM	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

UA825	5:30PM	9:55PM	2, 4, 7

MANILA (MNL)-GUAM

UA184	10:25PM	4:20AM+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA192	10:25PM	6:15AM+1	2, 5 via Palau
PR110	10:30PM	4:25AM+1	Daily
UA184	11:50PM	5:45AM+1	2, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA192/174	10:25PM	8:50AM+1	2, 5 via Palau, Guam
UA184/174	10:25PM	8:50AM +1	1, 3, 4, 6,7 via Guam
7C2306/3406	11:10PM	3:10PM+1	Daily
UA184/174	11:50PM	8:50AM +1	2, 5 via Guam

INCHEON (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3406	9:30AM	3:10PM	Daily
7C3472	11:05AM	4:40PM	Daily
TW307	8:30PM	2:15AM+1	Daily
7C3404	10:10PM	3:40AM+1	Daily

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

HX76	7:25PM	2:35AM+1	4, 7

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); UA United Airlines; PR, Philippine Airlines; TW, T'Way Air; OZ, Asiana Airlines; 7C, Jeju Air; BX, Air Busan • ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 2, 2024

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1301	SAIPAN	ROTA	08:30	09:00	Daily
1302	SAIPAN	ROTA	10:30	11:00	Daily
1303	SAIPAN	ROTA	15:30	16:00	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3101	ROTA	SAIPAN	9:30	10:00	Daily
3102	ROTA	SAIPAN	11:30	12:00	Saturday & Sunday
3103	ROTA	SAIPAN	13:30	14:00	Monday To Friday
3104	ROTA	SAIPAN	16:30	17:00	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
3401	ROTA	GUAM	11:30	12:00	Monday To Friday

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
4301	GUAM	ROTA	12:30	13:00	Monday To Friday

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
1201	SAIPAN	TINIAN	7:30	7:45	Daily
1202	SAIPAN	TINIAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
1203	SAIPAN	TINIAN	9:00	9:15	Daily
1204	SAIPAN	TINIAN	10:00	10:15	Daily
1206	SAIPAN	TINIAN	14:00	14:15	Daily
1207	SAIPAN	TINIAN	15:00	15:15	Daily
1208	SAIPAN	TINIAN	16:00	16:15	Daily
1209	SAIPAN	TINIAN	17:00	17:15	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	FROM	TO	DEPARTS	ARRIVES	FREQUENCY
2101	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:00	8:15	Daily
2102	TINIAN	SAIPAN	8:30	8:45	Daily
2103	TINIAN	SAIPAN	9:30	9:45	Daily
2104	TINIAN	SAIPAN	10:30	10:45	Daily
2106	TINIAN	SAIPAN	14:30	14:45	Daily
2107	TINIAN	SAIPAN	15:30	15:45	Daily
2108	TINIAN	SAIPAN	16:30	16:45	Daily
2109	TINIAN	SAIPAN	17:30	17:45	Daily

Response partners complete Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024 on Saipan

U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, in partnership with the CNMI Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Commonwealth Port Authority, and Isla Petroleum & Energy, successfully concluded the first-ever full-scale exercise, dubbed Lina'la Halom Tasi 2024, on Saipan from June 25 to 27. This exercise simulated an oil spill and aimed to enhance response capabilities and coordination among various regional agencies and organizations.

Cmdr. Ryan Crose, deputy commander of U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, praised the collaborative efforts, stating, "The Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024 is the first-ever full-scale pollution response exercise in the CNMI. It showcases the strength of our partnership with the CNMI. Our joint efforts in everything from the regional response plan to testing it in this exercise significantly improved our ability to respond effectively to maritime emergencies, ensuring the safety and security of our waters. We look forward to continued collaboration with our CNMI partners to enhance our collective preparedness and resilience."

Lina'la Halom Tasi means life in the ocean, which captures the importance of the ocean to the people of the Marianas. The exercise, which simulated an oil spill, has significantly enhanced response capabilities and coordination among various regional agencies and organizations, instilling a sense of confidence in collective preparedness.

"The U.S. Coast Guard Full Scale Exercise "Lina'la Halom Tasi 2024" will improve the preparedness and response efforts of the CNMI government and stakeholders. The U.S. Coast Guard ICS Section Chief Training has helped local personnel build their expertise in handling oil spill scenarios and improve their overall emergency response capabilities. In addition, they are helping protect the environment by practicing containment and cleanup procedures to reduce long-term environmental damage in a real-world emergency. Overall, the U.S. Coast Guard exercise significantly contributes to the CNMI's ability to safeguard its community and environment and reduce the potential impacts of oil spills," said CNMI HSEM special assistant Franklin Babauta.

The exercise featured events, including personnel training at the Emergency Operations Center on June 25, equipment drills at Tanapag Harbor on June 26, and a comprehensive after-action review on June 27.

"The exercise was a great success and a valuable hands-on experience for the IP&E team to prepare to be ready to respond to an oil spill if it occurs. The goal is always to prevent any incident from happening, of course," said Jack Salas, with IP&E. "IP&E practices a culture of safety, and we are committed to being a responsible company that demonstrates care for our community and environment. We are grateful for the opportunity to participate in this exercise that the Unified Command organized and for the productive collaboration and effort given by all the agencies that came together to be better equipped during a critical moment."

Exercise objectives included demonstrating and testing the ability of the responsible party and responding organizations, disposing of recovered material and contaminated debris, and establishing effective communication systems for response efforts. The exercise saw participation from a variety of agencies and organizations, including:

- CNMI Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management
- U.S. Coast Guard
- Commonwealth Ports Authority
- Isla Petroleum & Energy
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife
- Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services
- Department of Public Safety
- Department of Public Works
- Public School System

"The Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024 is a crucial part of the U.S. Coast Guard's ongoing exercise cycle, designed to ensure continuous readiness and the ability to respond swiftly and effectively to maritime emergencies," said Jack Ary, the port security and recovery specialist for U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam. "This rigorous cycle, emphasizing operational excellence, enhances our collaborative capabilities with regional partners, providing a sense of security."

USCG

Evaluators and Oil Spill Response Operations Co., LLC do a hotwash following an oil spill response equipment deployment off the Port of Saipan on June 26, 2024, as part of the on-water exercise in Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024. U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam, in partnership with the CNMI Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, the Commonwealth Port Authority, and Isla Petroleum & Energy, successfully concluded the full-scale Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024 from June 25 to 27. This exercise simulated an oil spill and aimed to enhance response capabilities and coordination among various regional agencies and organizations.

USCG

Responders work logistics in the Incident Command Post at the Saipan Emergency Operations Center on July 27, 2024, as part of Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024.

USCG

Cmdr. Ryan Crose, the U.S. Coast Guard incident commander, welcomes the team in the Incident Command Post at the Saipan Emergency Operations Center on June 27, 2024, in Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024.

USCG

OSROCO deploys oil spill response equipment off the Port of Saipan on June 26, 2024, as part of the on-water exercise in Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024.

USCG

Dr. Ruth Yender from NOAA gives a brief as responders work exercise incident in the Incident Command Post at the Saipan Emergency Operations Center on June 27, 2024, as part of Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024.

USCG

Evaluators discuss the oil spill response equipment deployment off the Port of Saipan on June 26, 2024, as part of the on-water exercise in Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024.

USCG

Evaluators from the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, and the CNMI Bureau of Coastal Resource Management observe OSROCO deploy oil spill response equipment off the Port of Saipan on June 26, 2024, as part of the on-water exercise in Lina'la Halom Tasi Exercise 2024.

About US Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/ Sector Guam

The U.S. Coast Guard Forces Micronesia/Sector Guam team focuses on maritime safety, security, and stewardship in Oceania. With a primary presence in Guam and Saipan and over 300 members across Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the team maintains a strong U.S. presence in the Micronesia sub-region and adjacent areas, closely tied to local communities.

About CNMI Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management

The mission of the CNMI Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is to protect lives, property, and the environment by effectively preparing for, preventing, responding to, and recovering from all threats, crimes, hazards, and emergencies. This is done by coordinating the efforts of the first response community to manage incidents effectively and collaborate with public, private, and community partnerships.

For more information about U.S. Coast Guard actions, contact CWO Sara Muir, Public Affairs officer, at sara.g.muir@uscg.mil or uscgforcesmicronesia@gmail.com.

For more information about CNMI HSEM actions, contact Bernard Villagomez, public information officer, at b.villagomez@cnmihsem.gov.mp. ***(PR)***

Nation

SUPREME COURT RULES:

Ex-presidents have broad immunity

» Dimming chance of a pre-election Trump trial

AP

Gary Roush, of College Park, Md., protests outside the Supreme Court Monday, July 1, 2024, in Washington.

WASHINGTON (AP)—The Supreme Court on Monday ruled for the first time that former presidents have broad immunity from prosecution, extending the delay in the Washington criminal case against Donald Trump on charges he plotted to overturn his 2020 presidential election loss and all but ending prospects the former president could be tried before the November election.

In a historic 6-3 ruling, the court's conservative majority, including the three justices appointed by Trump, narrowed the case against him and returned it to the trial court to determine what is left of special counsel Jack Smith's indictment.

Trump celebrated a "BIG WIN" on X. President Joe Biden said the justices set "a dangerous precedent (that) undermines the rule of this nation."

The ruling reflected a muscular view of presidential power, and left dissenting judges to criticize it as undermining a core democratic principle that no person is above the law.

The court's decision highlighted how the justices have been thrust into an impactful role in the November presidential election. Earlier, they had rejected efforts to bar him from the ballot because of his actions following the 2020 election. The court last week also limited an obstruction charge faced by Trump and used against hundreds of his supporters who stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021. The split among the justices also in many ways mirrored the political divide in the country.

"Under our constitutional structure of separated powers, the nature of presidential power entitles a former president to absolute immunity from criminal prosecution for actions within his conclusive and preclusive constitutional authority," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote for the court. "And he is entitled to at least presumptive immunity from prosecution for all his official acts. There is no immunity for unofficial acts."

The chief justice insisted that the president "is not above the law." But in a fiery dissent for the court's three liberals, Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote, "In every use of official power, the President is now a king above the law."

Reading from her opinion in the courtroom, Sotomayor said, "Because our Constitution does not shield a former president from answering for criminal and treasonous acts, I dissent." Sotomayor said the decision "makes a mockery of the principle, foundational to our Constitution and system of government, that no man is above the law."

The protection afforded presidents by the court, she said, "is just as bad as it sounds, and it is baseless."

Trump posted in all capital letters on his social media network shortly after the decision was released: "BIG WIN FOR OUR CONSTITUTION AND DEMOCRACY. PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN!"

Biden, in evening remarks from the White House, cited accepted restraints on presidential power all the way back to George Washington and bemoaned that "for all practical purposes, today's decision almost certainly means that there are virtually no limits on what a president can do."

Smith's office declined to comment on the ruling.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer denounced the ruling as "a disgraceful decision," made with the help of the three justices that Trump appointed.

"It undermines SCOTUS's credibility and suggests political influence trumps all in our courts today," the New York Democrat said on X.

The justices knocked out one aspect of the indictment. The opinion found Trump is "absolutely immune" from prosecution for alleged conduct involving discussions with the Justice Department.

Trump is also "at least presumptively immune" from allegations that he tried to pressure Vice President Mike Pence to reject certification of Democrat Joe Biden's electoral vote win on Jan. 6, 2021. Prosecutors can try to make the case that Trump's pressure on Pence still can be part of the case against him, Roberts wrote.

The court directed a fact-finding analysis on one of the more striking allegations in the indictment—that Trump participated in a scheme to enlist fake electors in battleground states won by Biden who would falsely assert that Trump had won. Both sides had dramatically different interpretations as to whether that effort could be construed as official, and the conservative justices said determining which side is correct would require additional analysis at the trial court level.

Roberts' opinion further restricted prosecutors by prohibiting them from using any official acts as evidence in trying to prove a president's unofficial actions violated the law. One example not relevant to this case but which came up in arguments was the hypothetical payment of a bribe in return for an ambassadorial appointment.

Under Monday's decision, a former president could be prosecuted for accepting a bribe, but prosecutors could not mention the official act, the appointment, in their case.

Justice Amy Coney Barrett, who joined the rest of Roberts' opinion, parted company on this point. "The Constitution does not require blinding juries to the circumstances surrounding conduct for which Presidents can be held liable," Barrett wrote.

She also described as unnecessary the analysis of the fake electors claim. "I see no plausible argument for barring prosecution of that alleged conduct," Barrett wrote.

World

Israel orders residents of Khan Younis to flee

KHAN YOUNIS, Gaza Strip (AP)—The Israeli army ordered a mass evacuation of Palestinians from much of Khan Younis on Monday, a sign that troops are likely to launch a new ground assault into the Gaza Strip's second-largest city.

The order suggests Khan Younis will be the latest target of Israel's raids into parts of Gaza it had previously invaded in the war, as it pursues regrouping Hamas militants. Much of Khan Younis was destroyed in a long assault earlier this year, but large numbers of Palestinians had moved back to escape another Israeli offensive in Gaza's southernmost city, Rafah.

The evacuation came as Israel released the director of what was once Gaza's largest hospital after holding him for seven months without charge or trial. Israel alleged the hospital had been used as a Hamas command center, which he and other Palestinian health officials have denied. The doctor said he and other detainees were held under harsh conditions and tortured.

The decision to release Mohammed Abu Selmia raised questions over Israel's claims surrounding Shifa Hospital, which Israeli forces have raided twice since the start of the war with Hamas. The hospital was left severely damaged after the raids.

Abu Selmia's release triggered an uproar across Israel's political spectrum. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office called it "a grave mistake." Government ministers and opposition leaders expressed outrage and insisted Abu Selmia played a role in Hamas' alleged use of the hospital—although Israeli security services rarely unilaterally free prisoners if they have a suspicion of militant links.

Monday's evacuation order covered the eastern half of Khan Younis and a large swath of the Gaza Strip's southeast corner. Earlier in the day, the army said a barrage of rockets out of Gaza was fired from Khan Younis.

As night fell, streams of civilians trudged on foot beside a steady flow of vehicles as people began making their way out of the evacuation zone. A woman dragged a rolling suitcase with a little girl riding on top. Others carried a few crucial belongings—mattresses, clothing, plastic buckets for washing, an electric fan. Trucks were piled high with possessions and furniture.

"We received a message on our mobile phones" to evacuate, said one displaced woman Zeinab Abu Jazar, holding back tears. "Look at these children, how they walk. We did not find a car to ride in."

Israel told people to move to Muwasi, a coastal area designated by the Israeli army as a safe zone and which has become filled with crowded and unsanitary tent camps.

The order suggested a new assault into Khan Younis was imminent. Israeli forces fought for weeks in Khan Younis earlier this year and withdrew, claiming to have destroyed Hamas battalions. But in other places where the military has made similar claims, renewed raids have underscored Hamas' capabilities.

Iranian presidential candidates accuse each other of having no plan, experience

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran's presidential candidates on Monday accused each other of having no solution for the country's problems ahead of Friday's runoff election aimed at choosing a successor for the late President Ebrahim Raisi, who died last month in a helicopter crash.

During a more than two-hour debate on public TV, reformist candidate Masoud Pezeshkian attacked his competitor, Saeed Jalili, a hard-line former nuclear negotiator, for his lack of experience, saying: "Tell me, what single company have you ever managed to make you capable of running the country?

Jalili, who is known as the "Living Martyr" after losing a leg in the 1980s Iran-Iraq war and is famous among Western diplomats for his haranguing lectures and hard-line stances, defended himself highlighting his career and several positions held, including that of top nuclear negotiator.

Pezeshkian further questioned his opponent on what plans he would have for reaching a nuclear deal, with Jalili responding he would approach it "based on strength not weakness," without providing details.

Jalili accused Pezeshkian of having no plans for managing the country, saying his presidency would drive the country to a "backward position," as it was under relatively moderate former President Hassan Rouhani (2013-2021). Rouhani struck a nuclear deal with world powers that capped Iran's uranium enrichment in return to lifting sanctions but later, in 2018, President Trump pulled the U.S. out from the landmark deal abruptly restoring harsh sanctions on Iran.

Jalili said that "with the support of people," Iran would achieve an economic growth of 8% a year, a promise Pezeshkian mocked, saying authorities should be allowed to "execute him if he failed" to deliver on it.

Iran must implement "a dynamic foreign policy" if it wants to have a successful economy, Jalili said, adding that it should not be limited to those nations that it has a problem with—a reference to the U.S. and the western world. Instead, he said, "Iran should look to the other 200 nations in the world where "foreign relations should be improved."

Pezeshkian said his foreign policy will be based on "engagement with the world" including engaging in "negotiations for lifting sanctions."

Both sides promised to address the problems of the country's poor, workers, women, ethnic groups and religious minorities, and vowed to provide better and faster internet—a plea to a younger generation that showed apathy during Friday's vote.

Pezeshkian and Jalili also said the low turnout in the first round—the lowest-ever poll turnout in the Islamic Republic's history—should be probed.

Life & Style

BET Awards 2024: Usher is honored, Will Smith returns

By MARIA SHERMAN
AP Music Writer

Usher accepted the lifetime achievement award at the 2024 BET Awards—even if the superstar mused it might be a bit early.

The Grammy winner stayed on his feet as a parade of artists performed his hits—Childish Gambino kicked it off with "U Don't Have to Call," joined by Keke Palmer, who took the lead on "You Make Me Wanna..." Coco Jones appeared in the audience for a sultry rendition of "There Goes My Baby," serenading Usher and his wife Jenn Goicoechea.

Summer Walker hit the stage for "Good Good," Tinashe did "Nice & Slow," Marsha Ambrosius tackled "Superstar" and Chlöe performed "Good Kisser." Teyana Taylor and Victoria Monét teamed up for "Bad Girl," mirroring Usher and Beyoncé's choreography from their performance of the song. Latto brought the energy for "Yeah!" In some ways, the homage underscored the women that carried much of the night—dominating the performances.

After introductions by Terry Lewis and Jimmy Jam, Usher accepted the award from music executive L.A. Reid.

"Getting here has definitely not been easy, but it has been worth it," Usher began his lengthy speech, reflecting on his career, which has spanned over three decades. He questioned the timing, saying, "I'm still running and gunning and I still love this (expletive) like I did when I was 8 years old," he said.

Much of his speech couldn't be heard to audiences at home because it was censored.

"I forgive each and every person who had anything to say negative about me because it only motivated me to be who I am," he said at one point.

Will Smith returns with God-filled new single

Earlier in the night, Will Smith stood in a circle of fire—joined by Fridayy and the gospel choir Sunday Service—to make the live debut of his latest single, "You Can Make It."

"I don't know who needs this right now," Smith opened his set. "But I am here to tell you, you can make it."

Mid-way through, Kirk Franklin joined, and then two rapped together. "Nobody gets an easy ride," Smith, who is in the midst of his comeback from slapping Chris Rock at the Oscars two years ago, told the room. "There is wisdom in that fire. Dance in your darkest moments."

AP

Usher accepts the Lifetime Achievement award during the BET Awards on Sunday, June 30, 2024, at the Peacock Theater in Los Angeles. Babyface, rear left, and L.A. Reid, rear center, look on.

The election is top of mind

The forthcoming U.S. presidential election was a huge topic of conversation throughout the show. After Childish Gambino presented Killer Mike with the album of the year award for "Michael," the rapper used his acceptance speech to address his Grammys arrest and voting.

"Technically, I was not supposed to be here. I was put in handcuffs, and I was marched out of this building. But I want to tell you, look at God. 'Cause I'm back, baby. I'm back and I'm winning," he said in his speech. Killer Mike was arrested at the Grammys earlier this year over a physical altercation he said was caused by an "over-zealous" security guard; he was not charged over the incident.

"They going to tell you who we vote for is important," he continued his speech, "And it is who we vote for on the big stage. It's important, but it's more important you know who your city council person is, who your prosecutor is."

Women dominate on stage and across genre

Megan Thee Stallion opened the show by emerging from an egg—a metaphor for her a new musical rebirth—before diving into with an energetic medley of her new singles "Hiss" and "Boa."

Hunter Biden sues Fox News over explicit images featured in streaming series

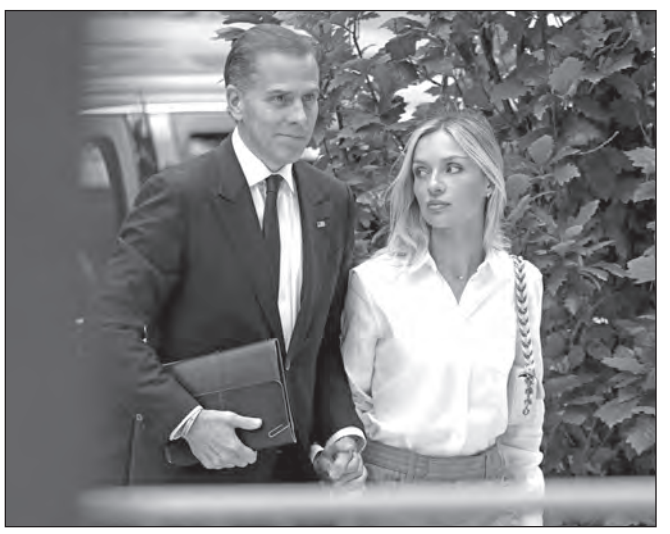
NEW YORK (AP)—Hunter Biden accused Fox News in a lawsuit of unlawfully publishing explicit images of him as part of a streaming series.

The president's son filed the lawsuit Sunday in state court in Manhattan over images in "The Trial of Hunter Biden," which debuted on the streaming service Fox Nation in 2022. The series features a "mock trial" of Hunter Biden on charges he has not faced and it includes images of Biden in the nude and engaged in sex acts, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit claims the dissemination of intimate images without his consent violated New York's so-called revenge porn law.

"Fox published and disseminated these Intimate Images to its vast audience of millions as part of an entertainment program in order to humiliate, harass, annoy and alarm Mr. Biden and to tarnish his reputation," according to the lawsuit.

A Fox News spokesperson called it an "entirely politically motivated lawsuit" that was "devoid of merit" in an emailed statement. The statement noted that attorneys for Biden sent them a letter demanding its removal from streaming platforms in April 2024.



AP

Hunter Biden arrives at federal court with his wife, Melissa Cohen Biden, June 11, 2024, in Wilmington, Del.

"The program was removed within days of the letter, in an abundance of caution, but Hunter Biden is a public figure who has been the subject of multiple investigations and is now a convicted felon. Consistent with the First Amendment, Fox News has accurately covered the newsworthy events of Mr. Biden's own making, and we look forward to vindicating our rights in court," according to the emailed statement.

Hunter Biden was convicted last month of three felony charges related to the purchase of a revolver in 2018 when, prosecutors argued, the president's son lied on a mandatory gun-purchase form by saying he was not illegally using or addicted to drugs.

The mock trial in the series involved charges of bribery and improper financial dealings with foreign governments, charges that have not been brought against Hunter Biden, according to the lawsuit.

The lawsuit seeks compensatory and punitive damages and an order directing Fox to remove any copies of the explicit images.

The lawsuit claims promotional materials have not been entirely removed by Fox and that the program is still available on some third-party streaming platforms.

Woman shamefully targets man with disabilities

DEAR ABBY: My son "Ethan" is a visually impaired adult with disabilities. He's articulate, down to earth and joyful to be around. He's a homeowner in a nice area of town.

A woman we met through the Nextdoor app bought an expensive winter coat from us very cheap. She and her husband know Ethan is in Special Olympics and awaiting a guide dog. She raised chickens, and when Ethan mentioned the new egg hatcher we bought for him, she asked if she could borrow it. I told her she could, after our one chick was grown enough.

I have asked repeatedly for her to return it. She said she would, and even asked for our address. I provided her with the information. She has since moved, but she's still in town. When I asked her more recently to please return it, she posted Ethan's photo from the Nextdoor app with a quote, "Dangerous and Unstable Person." What can I do to defend him? Legally, I think something needs to be done for his reputation now.

PERPLEXED MOM IN COLORADO

DEAR MOM: There is enough discrimination toward people with disabilities without this awful woman contributing to it. Consult an attorney to discuss her behavior and find out how to defend your son from her uncalled-for attack. To label your son as dangerous and unstable is a slander intended to damage his reputation.

■■■

DEAR ABBY: I have been in a long-distance relationship for 11 years. I love "Roger." He's a hardworking, decent person. He says he loves me too. We got engaged three years ago and set a date for this year.

Well, Roger has called it off, but he still wants to be together. He put our wedding on hold after we had a fight. He told me he can't marry me if I act like that. Abby, he's exaggerating the fight. He's my best friend, and he's always there for me if I need him. He lives two hours away. After I had a flood, he came to help. He couldn't even see too well. (He got shingles two days before my flood.) Regardless of how sick he was, he drove all that way to help me.

Roger has his own construction company. He has remodeled my kitchen and bathroom and done many other things for me. This is the second time he has postponed our wedding. I can't imagine life without him. Should I stay with him? Should we break up? I'd really hate to start dating again. Do you think he will marry me?

ON HOLD IN PENNSYLVANIA

DEAR ON HOLD: You stated that Roger lives two hours away. Have you driven those two hours to be with him? If you haven't, it may be time you did because he may have another romantic relationship going on closer to home that would be complicated to get out of.

From your description, he seems like a caring person, but there has to be a reason why he refuses to make a commitment. Until you get some honest answers from him, a marriage isn't likely to happen. If he is unattached, some premarital counseling may help to calm his fears.

■■■

Abby shares more than 100 of her favorite recipes in two booklets: "Abby's Favorite Recipes" and "More Favorite Recipes by Dear Abby." Send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $16 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby, Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Shipping and handling are included in the price.)

DEAR ABBY

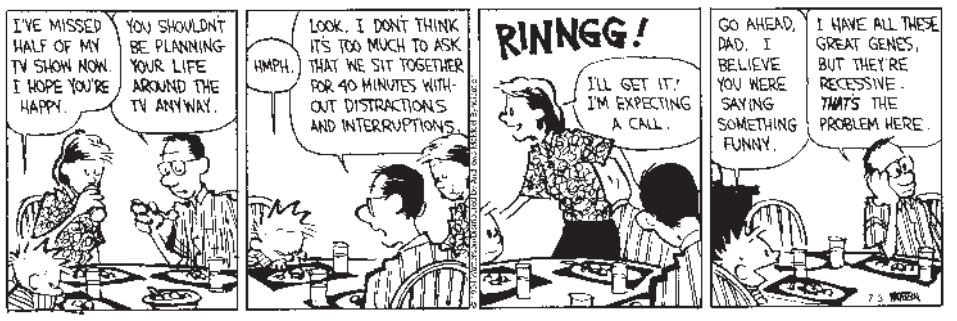
BY ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I'VE MISSED HALF OF MY TV SHOW NOW. I HOPE YOU'RE HAPPY.
YOU SHOULDN'T BE PLANNING YOUR LIFE AROUND THE TV ANYWAY.
HMPH.
LOOK. I DON'T THINK IT'S TOO MUCH TO ASK THAT WE SIT TOGETHER FOR 90 MINUTES WITHOUT DISTRACTIONS AND INTERRUPTIONS.
RINNGG!
I'LL GET IT. I'M EXPECTING A CALL.
GO AHEAD, DAD. I BELIEVE YOU WERE SAYING SOMETHING FUNNY.
I HAVE ALL THESE GREAT GENES, BUT THEY'RE RECESSIVE. THAT'S THE PROBLEM HERE.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

DAD'S GOING A WEEK WITHOUT COFFEE?
SO HE SAYS.
THAT WORRIES ME.
WHY, 'CAUSE YOU KNOW HOW MUCH HE LOVES IT?
NO, 'CAUSE HE WAS TYPING ON HIS LAPTOP WHILE IT WAS CLOSED.
WE'RE IN AN ADJUSTMENT PERIOD.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Prego rival
5 Invoice fig.
8 — -bitty
12 Object of worship
13 Actress Vardalos
14 Antitoxins
15 Soccer player's skill
17 "The Rookie" actor Julia
18 — de corps
19 Paint type
21 German cry
22 Not many
23 Attorney's field
26 Small barrel
28 Andrew — Webber
31 Sci-fi race
33 British rule of India
35 Pressing need
36 Apple products
38 Prattle
40 Campground letters
41 Crème — crème
43 Japanese pond carp
45 Nonstop
47 Scents
51 Source
52 Katy Perry hit single of 2010
54 French 101 verb
55 Leftover bit
56 Con
57 Requests
58 Mens — (criminal intent)
59 Unfavorable votes

DOWN

1 Teeming
2 Big fusses
3 Gunk
4 Prefix with violet
5 One more of the same
6 Soviet space station
7 "I can — hint!"
8 Haifa native
9 Group effort
10 Loyal
11 "— come back now, hear?"
16 Candle part
20 Super Bowl org.
23 Floral ring
24 Jungfrau, for one
25 Carpentry
27 Joke
29 "— -hoo!"
30 Crime lab evidence
32 Thinks creatively
34 Capital of Indonesia
37 Devious
39 Drill
42 Regarding
44 Hawkeye
45 Bailiwick
46 Used car sites
48 "— Lisa"
49 Bohemian
50 Vail gear
53 Hot temper

Solution time: 23 mins.

J	A	I	L		A	A	S		M	A	S	K
A	B	L	E		M	L	I		U	L	A	N
M	U	S	I	C	B	O	X		N	I	L	E
S	T	A		L	E	E		A	G	A	T	E
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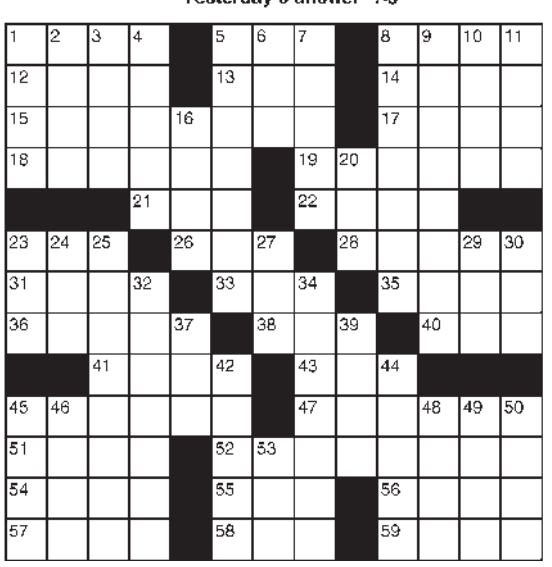
Y	A	H	O	O		F	I	R	E	P	I	T
O	L	A	Y		B	A	R		A	A	R	E
M	I	N	I	V	A	N		A	N	T	E	D
			F	A	T		P	R	S			
M	S	N	B	C		B	C	A		S	T	E
A	I	O	U		M	U	D	B	A	T	H	S
C	O	I	F		A	N	I		W	E	E	P
S	F	R	F		A	K	A		F	W	A	N

Yesterday's answer 7-3



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955!** 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Olivia Munn, 44; Andrea Barber, 48; Shawnee Smith, 55; Montel Williams, 68.

Happy Birthday: Spice things up this year by taking a unique approach to improving lifestyle and romance. Stop thinking about your dreams, hopes and wishes, and implement the changes that make you feel passionate. Invest more time and money in yourself, and build a financial cushion to live life your way. An opportunity to expand your interests will bring you closer to the life you desire. Your numbers are 9, 17, 24, 29, 33, 38, 49.

ARIES *(March 21-April 19):* Your creative imagination will encourage you to follow your heart and to enjoy what life offers. Speak up and share your ideas, and you'll gain insight into who can assist you in reaching your goals. You can't please everyone, but make a point to please yourself. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS *(April 20-May 20):* Applied pressure may motivate you, but before you act, get your facts straight and your plans in place. Too much of anything will turn into something costly. Timing is everything; feel free to change your mind midway if something doesn't feel right. ✪✪✪

GEMINI *(May 21-June 20):* Verify and rectify your plans based on research and discovery. Don't trust secondhand information or ads that promise the impossible. Source out the best information, and make decisions that fit your criteria. Preparation will make a difference in what and how you achieve your goal. ✪✪✪

CANCER *(June 21-July 22):* Take pride in your work; the rewards will come your way. Making a change will enhance your chance to connect with someone who can offer a unique perspective regarding how you use your skills and experience to gain leverage. ✪✪✪

LEO *(July 23-Aug. 22):* Try something new, do things differently and let your creative imagination lead the way. Head in a direction that will provide excitement and enrich your life. Use your powers of persuasion to get those you love to join you and to push your way forward with enthusiasm and courage. ✪✪✪✪

VIRGO *(Aug. 23-Sept. 22):* Take note of what others do before you take on too much or get involved in something for the wrong reason. A change may excite you, but educate yourself before you indulge. The pros and cons may not be as equal as someone wants you to believe. ✪✪

LIBRA *(Sept. 23-Oct. 22):* Boredom is a sign it's time to enforce a move. Before you go to extremes to satisfy your whims, take it upon yourself to research and figure out what's best for you and, more importantly, what you want. Having a purpose that appeases you is the challenge. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO *(Oct. 23-Nov. 21):* All work and no play will drag you down. Make plans to get together with someone who makes you think and challenges you mentally, physically or emotionally. A change will enhance your life, but first, you must make plans that satisfy your needs. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS *(Nov. 22-Dec. 21):* Talk the talk and walk the walk. How you handle situations will turn into your calling card. Make your presence felt and your fairness welcomed by those you deal with, and everything will fall into place. Live up to your word, and you'll meet expectations. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN *(Dec. 22-Jan. 19):* Welcome change and embrace new beginnings. Think outside the box, and dazzle everyone with your ingenuity and candor. Bring your feelings to the forefront and share your intentions with someone you love. What transpires will exceed your expectations. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS *(Jan. 20-Feb. 18):* Put your energy and power where it brings the highest returns. Focus on what makes you happy, and explore how to increase your productivity and expand your interests to meet your emotional and financial needs. Rearrange your space, and you'll make substantial gains due to efficiency. ✪✪✪✪✪

PISCES *(Feb. 19-March 20):* Stop, evaluate and avoid excess. Make self-improvement your goal instead of trying to change others. Once you are happy with yourself, you'll know who you want in your life and who you want to set free. Don't overreact; keep your thoughts to yourself. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are disciplined, giving and proactive. You are insightful and unique.

✪: Avoid conflicts; work behind the scenes. ✪✪: You can accomplish, but don't rely on others. ✪✪✪: Focus and you'll reach your goals. ✪✪✪✪: Aim high; start new projects.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	1	4		5	6	8		
	5		4	8	3	9	1	
			9				4	6
	2			4		6		5
		9	6	3				
1					8	4		
6		8		1	4		2	
5					9		6	
						3	5	

Difficulty: ★★★ 7/3

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Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's Answer

5	9	7	3	8	1	2	4	6
1	3	6	4	9	2	8	7	5
2	8	4	7	6	5	9	3	1
6	1	9	2	4	8	7	5	3
4	7	5	1	3	9	6	8	2
8	2	3	6	5	7	1	9	4
3	5	2	9	7	6	4	1	8
7	6	8	5	1	4	3	2	9
9	4	1	8	2	3	5	6	7

Difficulty: ★★ 7/2

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the **WONDERWORD.**

THE BRIDGES OF PITTSBURGH **Solution: 10 letters**

W	A	T	E	R	M	A	H	G	N	I	M	R	I	B
E	N	Y	A	W	T	R	O	F	E	R	R	Y	E	U
S	D	F	M	E	R	U	T	C	U	R	(T)	S	G	I
N	Y	E	Y	D	A	O	R	L	I	A	R	(A)	R	L
O	W	R	S	A	N	I	K	N	A	R	I	L	(O)	D
S	A	N	T	I	W	S	P	A	M	C	V	E	E	(B)
R	R	H	S	R	G	H	T	I	T	H	E	H	G	P
A	H	O	Y	C	A	N	G	E	H	W	R	A	F	A
C	O	L	T	H	H	N	T	I	E	A	E	G	O	N
L	L	L	R	I	I	E	S	S	H	L	E	N	R	H
E	O	O	E	L	F	I	N	I	E	K	N	O	T	A
H	I	W	B	L	E	L	D	L	T	W	I	N	P	N
C	H	E	I	S	S	H	A	P	E	A	G	O	I	D
A	O	A	L	L	E	G	H	E	N	Y	N	M	T	L
R	O	B	E	R	T	O	C	L	E	M	E	N	T	E

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Allegheny, Andy Warhol, Arch, Birmingham, Boat, Build, Design, Engineer, Fern Hollow, Ferry, Fort Pitt, Fort Wayne, George, Highway, Hills, Liberty, Maps, Monongahela, Ohio, Panhandle, Rachel Carson, Railroad, Rankin, River, Roberto Clemente, Roebling, Schenley, Shape, Steel, Structure, Transit, Walkway, Water, West

Yesterday's Answer: Harvest

The NEW Wonderword Grand Millennium #1 in LARGE PRINT is now available at www.WonderWordBooks.com or call 1-800-642-6480. (In Canada, call 1-855-232-2367)

76ers make splash with $400M in contracts for George, Maxey

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Paul George ditched LA and decided to help form a new Big Three in Philly with Joel Embiid and Tyrese Maxey. Of course, Maxey needed to stick around to complete the talented trio—and the Philadelphia 76ers went all in on lavish, long-term contracts to make that happen.

Up first, George agreed overnight to a four-year, $212 million free-agent contract after the nine-time All-Star spurned the Los Angeles Clippers. Maxey was on deck, and the first-time All-Star soon agreed in principle by sunrise Monday to a five-year, $204 million extension.

The 76ers threw down the gauntlet while most of the NBA was sleeping—committing more than $400 million in salary to two players they believe position them as the top contender to dethrone the NBA champion Boston Celtics.

Here they come, team of the year?

Hold up.

The 76ers have been down this high-priced, high-expectations road before without a championship to show for their efforts. They have failed to find the right pieces to field a winner around their franchise player Embiid, falling short in their star hunting with Ben Simmons, Jimmy Butler, James Harden, Al Horford and a list that goes on and on.

They'll try again, this time with George in tow—not as the elite centerpiece he was asked to be in the past with Indiana, Oklahoma City and the Clippers, but in a complementary role to Embiid, hopeful his 34-year-old legs can hold up over the long haul to ease some of the burden on the 2023 NBA MVP. The 76ers were a bottom feeder when Embiid was hurt last season—and he's often injured—so rolling the dice on a player widely considered the best available on the free-agent market was a chance team president Daryl Morey was willing to take.

AP

Los Angeles Clippers forward Paul George (13) dunks during the first half of an NBA basketball game against the Atlanta Hawks in Los Angeles, Sunday, March 17, 2024.

George and Maxey intend to sign their contracts shortly after the league's moratorium on signings is lifted on Saturday, a person with knowledge of the deals told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity because they were not yet finalized. Though the ink hasn't hit the contracts yet, the 76ers already are a sports betting darling, jumping to an 8-1 favorite to win the 2025 title behind Boston and Denver, per BetMGM Sportsbook.

"We're planning on being the best team in the East next season," Morey said last week during the draft.

George at least should keep them in the mix in the East and give them a viable No. 1 scoring option when Embiid is out.

The 76ers finished 31-8 in the regular season with Embiid— about a 65-win pace—and a woeful 16-27 without him.

The Sixers were a play-in tournament team this season and lost to New York in the first round. The Knicks also made an early splash in their bid to remain in the championship picture. They agreed to a $210 million deal with OG Anunoby and are set to acquire Mikal Bridges from Brooklyn in deals that only increased the pressure on Morey to take a big swing at the free-agent fence.

Morey and the 76ers devised this plan as far back as a year ago when they asked Maxey to play out the final year of his rookie contract and wait a summer for an extension to free up the salary cap space needed to pursue free agents. Morey then took on only expiring contracts and draft picks in his deals throughout the season—notably in trading Harden to the Clippers and signing veteran Kyle Lowry to a short-term deal—that left the 76ers with essentially only Embiid and Maxey as the lone key holdovers on the roster once the season ended and roughly $65 million in cap space this summer.

"This offseason's a big one," Morey said after the 76ers were knocked out of the playoffs. "I owe it to the fans, to ownership, to everybody to get this team where we're in a place where we're competing for championships."

George — who has averaged 20.8 points over a 14-year career — wanted to move on from the Clippers and declined a player option in his contract for $48.8 million in 2024-2025 that ended a five-year stretch with the team in which he averaged at least 21.5 points each season.

The Clippers' attempt at winning it all with their Big Three of George, Kawhi Leonard and Harden fell flat.

"The gap was significant," the Clippers said Sunday night in a news release. "We understand and respect Paul's decision to look elsewhere for his next contract."

He looked all the way across the U.S. to Philadelphia.

George joins a Sixers team that has been a perennial underachiever, even as Embiid blossomed into one of the top players in the NBA. Philadelphia has not won an NBA title since 1983 or even advanced out of the second round of the playoffs since 2001.

Embiid, set to play this summer for Team USA at the Paris Olympics, fueled rumors that George was headed to Philly during a TV appearance together during the NBA Finals.

"Hopefully this offseason, we find a way to get better, and you know," Embiid said, pausing to side-eye George, "add some pieces."

The 76ers did strengthen their roster with the expected addition of center Andre Drummond and Eric Gordon and the return of Kelly Oubre Jr. in more deals expected to be announced as early as Saturday. The 76ers are also high on first-round draft pick Jared McCain out of Duke. And George is an upgrade in talent over the departed—and much-maligned—Tobias Harris.

Maxey was named the league's most improved player this season. His scoring rose for the third consecutive year, and he finished the regular season averaging 25.9 points, 6.2 assists, 3.7 rebounds and 1.0 steals per game—all career bests.

George is a six-time member of the All-NBA Team. He's a four-time member of the NBA All-Defensive Team and was the league's most improved player in 2013. He was a finalist for both NBA MVP and Defensive Player of the Year in 2019, when he led the league with 2.21 steals per contest. George also has never played in an NBA Finals.

Much like Embiid's, George's injury history should give the 76ers reason for some concern. George played 76 games last season, the first time he played more than 56 since 2018-19.

Still, with few available options, and money to burn, the 76ers had little choice but to chase an aging—yet still elite—star such as George.

"It's a big offseason for us," Morey said in May. "We obviously have two great studs to build around in Joel and Tyrese."

They hope they found a third one in George.

Tatum agrees to 5-year, $314M supermax extension, AP source says

Jayson Tatum is the newest member of the NBA's $300 million club.

The Boston Celtics star has agreed to a five-year, $314 million contract extension to remain with the reigning NBA champions, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press on Monday.

The new pact will begin with the 2025-26 season and keep the five-time All-Star in Boston through 2029-30 season, according to the person who spoke on the condition of anonymity because it has not been announced.

The Athletic and ESPN were first to report the deal.

When completed Tatum's new, supermax contract will become the largest in NBA history, supplanting the one signed last offseason by teammate Jaylen Brown, when he inked a five-year deal that will pay him up to $304 million.

Tatum averaged 26.9 points, 8.1 rebounds, 4.9 assists and shot 47% from the field in earning All-NBA first-team honors for the third consecutive season. Those numbers grew to 25 points, 9.7 rebounds and 6.3 assists per game during a playoff run in which he eclipsed 30 points six times, including 31 in their championship-clinching Game 5 win over the Dallas Mavericks.

He will look to add to his hardware this summer as a member of the U.S. men's basketball team when it attempts to capture its fifth consecutive gold medal. Tatum previously won a gold medal at the Tokyo Olympics in 2021.

News of Tatum's deal came on the same day that fellow Celtics starter Derrick White reportedly agreed to a four-year, $126 million extension. All five of Boston's starters—Tatum, Brown, White, Jrue Holiday and Kristaps Porzingis—were already under contract for next season. With Tatum and White's new agreements they now all could be together through at least the 2025-26 season.

The deal also came on the heels of the Celtics ownership group, led by Wyc Grousbeck, announcing its plans to sell all of its shares by 2028.

Barring any significant roster changes, Boston is expected to have a combined payroll and luxury tax that will exceed $400 million when Tatum's contract takes effect. ***(AP)***

Pistons and coach JB Bickerstaff agree on 4-year contract with team option for 5th, AP source says

DETROIT (AP)—The Detroit Pistons have agreed to a four-year contract with coach J.B. Bickerstaff with a team option for a fifth season, a person familiar with the situation told The Associated Press on Sunday.

The person spoke the AP on condition of anonymity because the agreement had not been announced.

The Cleveland Cavaliers fired Bickerstaff in May after they lost to Boston in the Eastern Conference semifinals despite them winning 99 games over two years.

The Pistons fired coach Monty Williams one season into a six-year, $78.5 million contract after they had the NBA's worst record for a second straight year. They also fired general manager Troy Weaver after they won 23% of their games in his four seasons.

Pistons president of basketball operations Trajan Langdon has been busy trying to turn around a three-time NBA-championship winning franchise that has fallen on hard times.

The 45-year-old Bickerstaff, who twice finished among the top five in NBA Coach of the Year voting, was 170-159 in four-plus seasons in Cleveland. He had six victories in the playoffs. He took over when John Beilein, a former Michigan coach, walked away from the Cavs during the 2019-20 season.

Bickerstaff also was promoted to replace fired coaches in Houston and Memphis, going 37-34 with the Rockets in the 2015-16 season and winning 48 games with the Grizzlies during most of the 2017-18 and all of the following season.

Bickerstaff's father, Bernie, won 419 NBA games with Seattle, Denver, Washington, Charlotte and the Los Angeles Clippers.

The Pistons went into free agency with $50 million in salary cap space, desperately looking for an influx in talent to play with 2021 No. 1 overall pick Cade Cunningham.

Langdon has begun to reshape the roster by declining a $19 million option for Evan Fournier, extending a qualifying offer to Simone Fontecchio and acquiring Tim Hardaway Jr. from Dallas in a trade. He drafted Ron Holland of the G League Ignite with the fifth pick overall.

The Pistons haven't won a playoff game since 2008, when they appeared in the Eastern Conference finals for the sixth straight year.

Astros beat Blue Jays for their 10th win in 11 games

TOTONTO (AP)—Hunter Brown pitched six shutout innings, Jeremy Pe√±a and Yordan Alavarez hit home runs and the Houston Astros beat the Toronto Blue Jays 3-1 on Monday afternoon for their 10th win in 11 games.

After going 4-0 with a 1.16 ERA in five June starts, Brown (6-5) opened July with another solid outing. The right-hander allowed two hits, both singles. He walked three and struck out five.

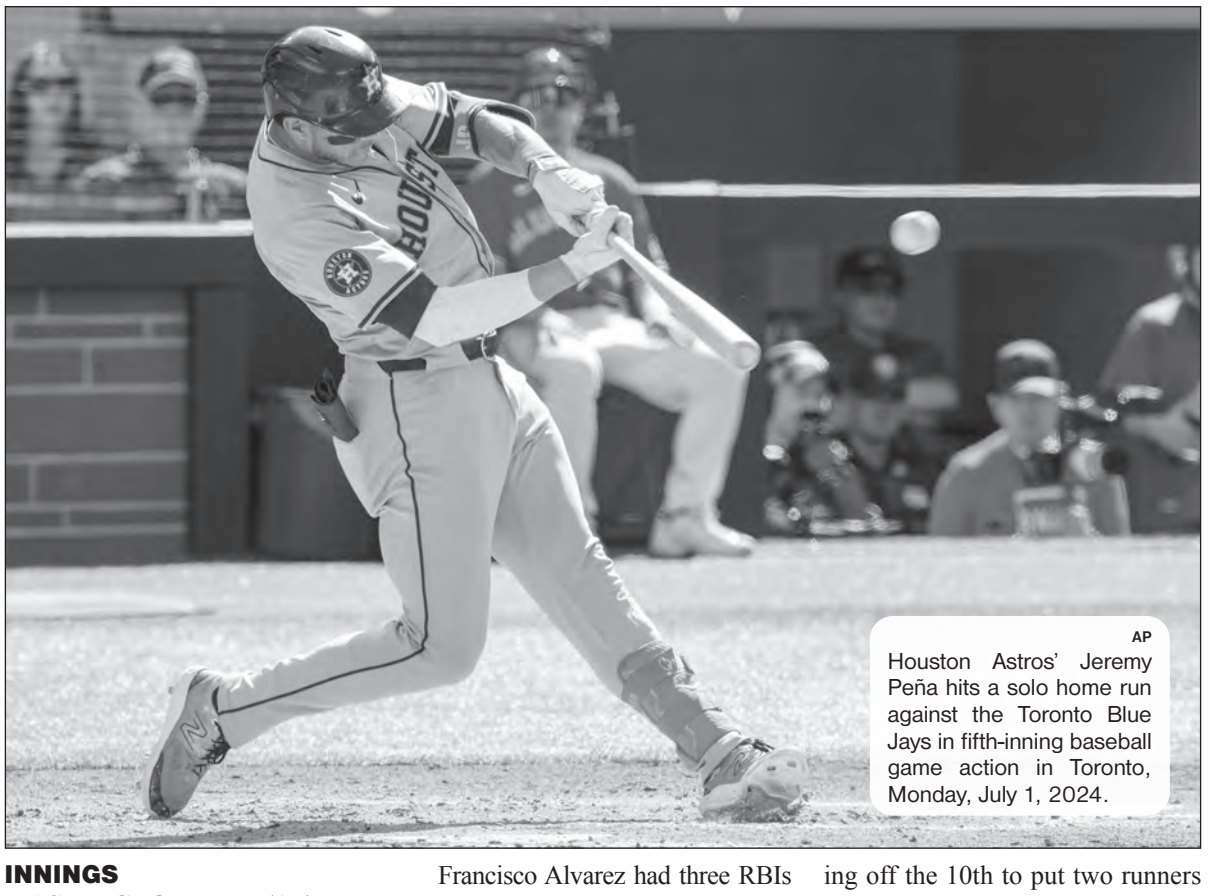
Decked out in special red jerseys and caps, the Blue Jays lost on the Canada Day holiday for a second year in a row.

After Rafael Montero worked a 1-2-3 seventh inning, the Blue Jays loaded the bases against Bryan Abreu in the eighth. Abreu escaped by getting Daulton Varsho to ground out.

Josh Hader allowed a solo home run to Ernie Clement in the ninth but finished for his 13th save in 14 chances.

Toronto right-hander Yariel Rodriguez retired the first 14 batters before Pe√±a hit a first-pitch homer in the fifth inning for his sixth of the season.

Rodriguez (0-3) allowed one run and two hits in a career-high 6 2/3 innings. He walked two and struck out six.



AP

Houston Astros' Jeremy Peña hits a solo home run against the Toronto Blue Jays in fifth-inning baseball game action in Toronto, Monday, July 1, 2024.

METS 9, NATIONALS 7, 10 INNINGS

WASHINGTON (AP)—J.D. Martinez and Jose Iglesias homered in a six-run 10th inning, and New York held off Washington to spoil the major league debut of prized outfield prospect James Wood.

Francisco Alvarez had three RBIs for the Mets (41-41), who stopped a two-game skid and improved to 17-6 in their last 23 games.

In the opener of a four-game series between NL East rivals, Harrison Bader was hit by pitch leading off the 10th to put two runners on. Martinez followed with his 10th homer, a drive to center field against Hunter Harvey (2-4).

Tyrone Taylor doubled and scored on Alvarez's first career triple, which hit high off the right-field wall, and Iglesias made it 9-3 when he sent a two-run shot to center for his first big league homer since 2022 with Colorado.

Washington scored four times in the bottom half before Reed Garrett struck out Luis Garc√≠a Jr. with two on for his fourth save.

ROCKIES 8, BREWERS 7, 10 INNINGS

DENVER (AP)—Jake Cave came through with a bases-loaded single over a five-man infield in the bottom of the 10th inning to give Colorado a victory against Milwaukee.

Brenton Doyle homered twice and Charlie Blackmon went deep on his birthday for the third time in his career to help the Rockies outlast the Brewers.

William Contreras homered among his three hits for Milwaukee, finishing a triple shy of the cycle. Willy Adames had three hits, including an RBI single to ignite a three-run eighth that put the Brewers back in front 7-6.

Doyle homered for the second time in the game, a two-out solo shot in the bottom of the eighth off Elvis Peguero, to produce the fourth tie of the night at 7-all.

Tyler Kinley (4-1) picked up the win with a scoreless 10th inning, getting out of a jam by striking out Garrett Mitchell.

It's time to dole out a few unconventional midseason baseball awards

By NOAH TRISTER
AP Baseball Writer

The major league season has passed its halfway point—in terms of games, not the All-Star break—so award speculation is going to heat up. First-half MVP, Cy Young and Rookie of the Year talk will be plentiful.

Here's another collection of slightly less formal midseason awards:

Healthiest Home Run Celebration: Baltimore's "hydration station"—basically a set of hoses that the batter and baserunners can drink from after a homer—has been put to plenty of use this season. The Orioles have added the long ball to an offense that already had plenty of athleticism and line drive hitters. Baltimore leads the major leagues with 139 home runs after hitting 60 last month, one off the major league record by a team in June.

Most Effective McDonald's Mascot: Who knew cheap fast food was the key to success for the New York Mets' pricey roster? Grimace threw out the first pitch at their game June 12, and it was the start of a seven-game winning streak. Skeptics of the power of purple might point out that New York actually started playing better a few days earlier, when the Mets won three straight at Washington from June 3-5 and then split their London series with Philadelphia. In any case, New York has won 16 of its last 22.

AP

New York Mets' Brandon Nimmo (9) celebrates after hitting a home run during the seventh inning of a baseball game against the Houston Astros, Sunday, June 30, 2024, in New York.

Most Gracious Divisional Rival: The AL Central could put three teams in the postseason this year, and credit is certainly due to Cleveland, Minnesota and Kansas City for what they've done so far. They can also thank the Chicago White Sox, who are 38 games under .500 and, more importantly, 6-21 against the rest of the division. Chicago has actually done OK against first-place Cleveland, but the White Sox are 0-7 against the Twins and 1-6 against the Royals. It's no coincidence that if the season ended now, those two teams would be wild cards.

The Best Revenge Is Living Well Honor: Milwaukee manager Craig Counsell left the Brewers to take over the rival Chicago Cubs in a huge offseason move. The jilted Brewers—even after trading ace Corbin Burnes—are 6 1/2 games in front in the NL Central. And that's over St. Louis. They lead the last-place Cubs by 11 1/2.

TRIVIA TIME

Which team had the worst divisional record in major league history?

LINE OF THE WEEK

Wyatt Langford of the Texas Rangers became the first major leaguer this season to hit for the cycle in an 11-2 victory over Baltimore on Sunday night.

COMEBACK OF THE WEEK

The sputtering Toronto Blue Jays are showing little sign of turning it around. They led 6-2 at Boston on Monday night before allowing four runs in the bottom of the eighth inning. Then in the bottom of the ninth, Ceddanne Rafaela reached on an error and then scored on Jarren Duran's single for a 7-6 Boston victory. The Red Sox had a win probability of 2.5% in the bottom of the eighth, according to Baseball Savant.

TRIVIA ANSWER

Since divisional play started in 1969, the worst record within a division belongs to the 2022 Washington Nationals, who went 17-59 against the NL East for a winning percentage of .224. The White Sox are currently at .222.

(Like the AL Central at the moment, that 2022 NL East included three playoff teams, with the Mets and Atlanta winning 101 games each.)

Home Run Derby issues format change that limits the number of pitches each hitter will see

This year's event, which takes place on July 15 at Arlington, Texas, limits the number of pitches each hitter can face in each round and changes the setup of its opening round.

In the first round and the semifinals, each hitter will get either three minutes or 40 pitches, depending on which of those benchmarks gets reached first. In the final round, a hitter will get two minutes or 27 pitches. That doesn't include the bonus periods that hitters will get in each round.

Under the previous format, hitters still faced a time limit but there wasn't any restriction on the number of pitches they could face.

Each hitter will get bonus pitches until they hit into three outs during that period. He gets a fourth out if he hits a homer that goes at least 425 feet in the bonus period. Under the old format, each hitter got an extra 30 seconds of bonus time and could receive another 30 seconds of bonus time if he hit two homers of at least 440 feet during the regulation period.

All eight hitters will be competing against one another in the opening round, with the top four advancing to the semifinals. The semifinalists will be seeded depending on how many homers they hit in the first round.

Under the previous format, the eight hitters essentially competed in a tournament, with one-on-one quarterfinal, semifinal and championship matchups. They were seeded according to their season home-run totals.

Although Major League Baseball hasn't yet announced all the players competing in this year's Home Run Derby, Baltimore's Gunnar Henderson said Sunday night on social media that he would be participating. Last year's Home Run Derby was won by Toronto's Vladimir Guerrero Jr. ***(AP)***

July Independence Day 2-Mile Race tomorrow

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants of the 3rd Annual 4th of July Independence Day 2-Mile Race last year pose for a group photo with Run Saipan at the Garapan Fishing Base.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

It's that time of year again as we celebrate the birth of the red, white, and blue with a run, jog, or walk this July 4th before festivities begin as Run Saipan presents its 4th Annual 4th of July Independence Day 2-Mile Race tomorrow morning at 6am.

Instead of the usual start at the Garapan Fishing Base, due to road construction on Beach Road, this year's course will start at the American Memorial Park in the Smiling Cove Marina parking lot behind the flag memorial and will go through the newly paved Industrial Road along the Gov. Eloy S. Inos Peace Park in Puerto Rico.

This race is sponsored by Latte Built and is a sanctioned race by Northern Marianas Athletics.

It was inspired by the U.S. Army Combat Physical Fitness Test, in which they do a 2-mile run among other workouts.

When asked about the new course, Run Saipan president Edward Dela Cruz Jr. said, "We used to run south on the pathway but people dropped their tents and even barricaded their plots so we ended up running north. Now with the Garapan Revitalization construction and Beach Road construction, there is no space on certain parts of the walkway."

He said this is the third time they've switched their course, as last year, they ran up north and back from the Garapan Fishing Base, while the original course in the first two races ran south and back from the Garapan Fishing Base.

Kosuke Sato completed last year's race first overall with a time of 12:26, while Rosemarie Chisato was the first woman runner at 15:57.

For more information on the 3rd Annual 4th of July Independence Day 2-Mile Race, contact Edward S. Dela Cruz Jr. at runsaipan@gmail.com and (670) 287-0891. To register, click on https://raceroster.com/events/2024/83217/july-4th-independence-day-2-mile-race-2024.

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tista, 21-7, 21-6; and Japan's Mihane Endo edged Guam's Kristine Deng, 21-5, 21-5.

Zong Han Lee beat Louis Millianer Choo, 21-8, 21-8; Chinese Taipei's Wu Chang Min trounced Yangson Zhao, 21-8, 21-6; and Kwang Hee Heo fought until the end against Shaunna Li, 18-21, 21-12, 21-8.

Heo then took on Eogene Ewe and won, 21-14, 14-21, 21-17; Peng Yu Wei won via walkover vs. Isabelle Rusli; Ping-Hsien Huang defeated Varot Uraiwong, 21-12, 21-16; and Yu Cheng Chen got the best of Tao Ong Lee, 21-19, 21-9.

Then, Rylan Tan put off Erfan Hajibeigy in three sets, 13-21, 21-17, 21-19; Chen Jia Chu crushed NMI's Ean Camacho, 21-3, 21-7; and Sorano Yoshikaawa beat So Yul Lee, 21-11, 22-20.

Meanwhile, Paulo Quidato won the first game for NMI as he beat Guam's Corey Lei, 21-14, 21-19, while later, teammate Kyle Salcedo defeated Guam's Yu Xuan Xia, 21-12, 21-18.

Quidato also played in the two Olympic qualifiers last year. the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2023 and the TakeCare Saipan International 2023.

He said of this tournament, "I was nervous in the beginning of the match because I didn't know who my opponent was." He said he didn't underestimate his opponent and throughout the match, he focused on keeping his own pace. "It was a pretty good game overall and I'm looking forward to my next match," he said.

LEIGH GASES

NMI's Paulo Quidato won the first game for NMI in the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024 yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

For Salcedo, he shook nerves off as he competed in his first international tournament. He said of his match, "It was nerve-wracking for sure. I felt like I didn't play how I usually played because the nerves were there."

He will next face off against players from China, South Korea, or Malaysia, and said he hopes that he gets a few good rallies and some points in. "Their playing level is so high so my aim is just to have good rallies and receive the smashes—try to survive until the matches," he said. On winning his first international match, he said, "I'm happy, but I feel like I could've done better."

Today is Day 2 of the tournament, with more NMI players sharing the courts with athletes from 15 other countries.

NOVICE

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champion Christian Camacho came in second this time with 44 points. Frankie Sablan completed the Top 3 with 38 points.

"The weather was hot and sunny and the course was dry," said Guerrero who rode his 2023 Yamaha Yz250f to victory.

Guerrero then dedicated his win to ERICCO Racing Team coach Ellery Cruz, who got him interested in motocross, YCO True Value, Inas Kitchen, Rep. Manny Castro (Ind-Saipan), and his family for "all their support and everything they've done for me."

As for what led him to pursue motocross, he said, "I saw my friends participating in the sport and it looked fun to me which attracted me to start riding and having fun."

Guerrero said he hopes motocross would help him become a more well-rounded individual. "What I want to achieve in the sport is improve my mental toughness and physical fitness."

In the Peewee ATV Class of the Marianas Racing Association race, Ayven Sablan was the lone rider and got 50 points, while Annela Igitol topped the Mini ATV with also a perfect run with 50 points. Payton Pangelinan and Nakoa Torres finished second and third with 44 points and 40 points, respectively.

Results of the other classes of the June 2024 "MOTO IV" Points Race Series will be published in the next issues of *Saipan Tribune*.

FOUNDER'S CLUB SPONSOR

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pacifica Insurance Underwriters, Inc. is proud to be a longtime supporter of the Joeten Daidai Foundation. They have committed as a Founder's Club sponsor for this year's Joeten Memorial Golf Classic, which benefits the JDF foundation. This year's tournament will feature a hole-on-one prize of $75,000 sponsored by Pacifica. Swing to win on hole No.11 and best of luck to all the golfers this coming Saturday, July 6, at LaoLao Bay Golf & Resort.

ANSON

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first year back."

In other individual awards, Peliliu's John Terlaje was had the most runs scored with 34; Wazzup's Joe Lizama and Asahi's John Taitano were tied as Doubles champions with 10 each; Tokahao's Clint Quitugua and Asahi's Suo Matsutaro were tied as Triples champions at four each; Sufa's Audie Maratita and Man Amigos' Manny Sablan were the power hitters of the season as they won the Home Run award with 13 each; Maratita then claimed the RBI award with 44.

On the bump, Hagu Lamun pitcher Opong Celis was the Earned Run Average champion with the league's lowest ERA at 6.567, while Saipal's Leo Bobai was the Strikeout king with 43.

Asahi won the championship over runner-up team Sufa. The Sportsmanship Award went to Tuturamz. In the regular season, the pennant winner was also Asahi, while the runner-up was Hagu La'mun, and third place was Sufa.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

MLB STANDINGS

AMERICAN LEAGUE

East Division	W	L	Pct	GB
Baltimore	53	31	.631	–
New York	54	32	.628	–
Boston	44	39	.530	8½
Tampa Bay	42	42	.500	11
Toronto	38	46	.452	15
Central Division				
Cleveland	52	30	.634	–
Minnesota	47	37	.560	6
Kansas City	47	39	.547	7
Detroit	38	46	.452	15
Chicago	24	62	.279	30
West Division				
Seattle	47	39	.547	–
Houston	43	41	.512	3
Texas	38	46	.452	8
Los Angeles	36	47	.434	9½
Oakland	30	56	.349	17

NATIONAL LEAGUE

East Division				
Philadelphia	55	29	.655	–
Atlanta	46	36	.561	8
New York	41	41	.500	13
Washington	39	45	.464	16
Miami	30	54	.357	25
Central Division				
Milwaukee	50	35	.588	–
St. Louis	43	40	.518	6
Pittsburgh	40	43	.482	9
Cincinnati	39	45	.464	10½
Chicago	39	46	.459	11
West Division				
Los Angeles	52	33	.612	–
San Diego	46	42	.523	7½
Arizona	41	43	.488	10½
San Francisco	41	44	.482	11
Colorado	29	55	.345	22½

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Top seeds advance in Crowne Plaza Open

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

» NMI's Quidato, Salcedo also notch wins

The top seeds as well the NMI's young badminton players notched wins at the start of the Badminton World Federation Grade 3 International Challenge tournament—the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024 yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Women's No. 1 seed Hsiang Ti Lin smashed past Insyirah Khan, 21-18, 21-15; No. 3 seed Kaoru Sugiyama fought tooth and nail against Shaunna Li in three tough sets, 21-18, 21-12, 21-8.

New Zealand's Edward Lau, who topped the men's singles event in the Oceania Championships 2024 in Victoria, Australia last February, won his match over Canadian Hing Long Wong, 21-9, 21-9.

For 2019 World Junior Championship winner and seventh seed Riko Gunji of Japan, she bested Chinese Taipei's Yi-Ting Hung, 21-19, 21-8; and No. 6 seed Akari Kurihara beat Thamonwan Nithiittikrai, 21-15, 21-17.

At press time, not all matches are finished.

Results of the other finished matches were U.S.A.'s Airi Oku won over Guam's Wanxin Yue, 21-6, 21-7; India's Aryamann Tandon defeated Guam's Rui Wang, 21-6, 21-4; and Chinese Taipei's Hsin-Pei Tsai beat out South Korea's Seo Yeon Yoo in three tough sets, 17-21, 21-19, 21-11.

South Korea's Pyeong Gang Choi beat NMI's Andreau Galvez, 21-6, 21-7; Chinese Taipei's Hsin Tse Tu blew by NMI's Marlon Bau-

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LEIGH GASES

New Zealand's Edward Lau, who topped the men's singles event in the Oceania Championships 2024 in Victoria, Australia last February, in action against Canadian Hing Long Wong in the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024 yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

LEIGH GASES

NMI's Kyle Salcedo serves in the second set of his game against Guam's Yu Xuan Xia on the first day of the Crowne Plaza Northern Marianas Open 2024 yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Guerrero finally hits paydirt in Novice Class

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Matthew Guerrero gets some air in the Novice Class of the June 2024 "MOTO IV" Points Race Series last Sunday at the Cowtown Race Park in Marpi.

By MARK RABAGO
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EDITOR

After several runner-up finishes, Matthew Guerrero finally took the checkered flag of the Novice Class in the June 2024 "MOTO IV" Points Race Series last Sunday at the Cowtown Race Park in Marpi.

The 14-year-old Mt. Carmel School student won both heats for a perfect 50 points, while three-time monthly

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Anson, Cartfield are Master's MVPs

LEIGH GASES

Regular season most valuable player in the 2024 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association master's division, Cartfield Sablan, third from right, poses with his trophy during the awards ceremony last Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.

LEIGH GASES

Finals most valuable player Anson Jones of champion team Asahi, second from right, poses with his trophy during the awards ceremony last Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.

By LEIGH GASES
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REPORTER

Anson Jones and Cartfield Sablan were named the most valuable players of the 2024 Budweiser Belau Amateur Softball Association masters division last Sunday in their awards ceremony last Sunday at the Dandan Softball Field.

Jones of the championship team Asahi, claimed the finals MVP award after going two for three in game one, with three RBIs on a single and a double. While in the second game, he added two homers, three more RBIs, and one single in his three-for-five MVP stint.

For Sablan of Peliliu, he was named the regular season MVP and Batting Champion after he wrapped it up with a .684 average from 39 hits out of 57 at-bats.

Forty-year-old Jones kept up with his family's synonymous ring with bat and ball sports this year as he made a comeback. He said after a 20-year hiatus that led to an MVP run, "It feels good to play with the team in my

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